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AUTUMN BOOKS SUPPLEMENT

THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION

The Week-end Review

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THE REBUFF TO INDIA

THE Viceroy's reply to the dignified and proper request of the National Congress for a statement of war-aims in their bearing on India has missed an opportunity that comes only once in a generation. It makes no step forward towards democracy or self-determination. It has disappointed even the more moderate phases of Indian opinion, and we fear that it will drive Congress into active hostility. It makes the most of all the dissentient minorities in the worst Anglo-Indian tradition of dividing to rule. We shall, however, do well to remember that Congress won an All-India majority at the recent provincial elections, and is in office in six provinces. Its representative governing body has been summoned for an early meeting. Mr. Gandhi has made it clear that he shares its indignant disappointment. It is probable that its decision will be for passive disobedience. With political India in revolt what figure shall we then cut in the world as the champions of democracy?

Lord Linlithgow is content to repeat the old vague pledge, in itself almost meaningless, "that the obtainment of Dominion status is the goal of British policy in India." In the meanwhile, for the duration of the war, the Federal Scheme is suspended, for the very good reason that it has no support whatever in India, since even the Princes have pronounced it unacceptable. The Viceroy offers its revision after the war, by consultation with all parties, creeds and interests, which means presumably another Round Table Conference. This is not self-determination, but rather the flat denial of it. On the last occasion, after debates in a gathering so selected that it could not conceivably reach agreement, a scheme was imposed from Westminster which was presented as an instalment of freedom, but which satisfied no single Indian party and was rejected by all of them. To offer a repetition of this procedure is regarded in India as a mockery.

The Viceroy's interim proposal is no better. By way of giving Indians some say in the conduct of a war in which they were made belligerents without their consent, a "consultative group" is suggested. This is to "represent" all Indian parties, together with the autocratic

princes. In fact, its members are to be handpicked by the Viceroy, from panels submitted to him. We fail to see any advance whatever in this plan. India already has a legislative assembly, which has the merit of being largely elective, though on an absurdly plutocratic franchise. The various parties are all represented in it. The new "consultative group" will differ only in one important detail: the princely autocrats will sit upon it. Such a proposal will rather inflame than conciliate.

The right course would have been to promise, in a formula acceptable to Indians, the drafting of a constitution at the end of the war by an honest process of self-determination, that is to say by a representative body. In the meanwhile, without altering the constitution, responsible government could be established, in fact, though not in law, by placing the actual leaders of India on the Governor-General's Council, on the understanding that he would actually follow their advice. Among them, in high positions, Muslims would have their place. We trust that both sections of the Opposition will make some such demand as this in Parliament and back it by a vote of censure.

For many in Britain and the Empire, India is the test that decides the meaning of this war; so it will be for the world at large. If Indians revolt and we coerce them in the eyes of civilised mankind we are merely one Empire that fights another. The effect in America, always keenly interested in India, will be calamitous. She has never had any sympathy with British Imperialism; her sympathy for Britain is directed to different and more noble aspects of our joint inheritance. This tragic stupidity may be a worse disaster than the sinking of many battleships.

Our Turkish Ally

The new Russian tactic of dictation to neighbours has failed in the case of the Turks, who have their proper pride. The Turkish Premier has told his Parliament bluntly that M. Sarajoglu's return from Moscow means that the negotiations have been broken off. The Russian communication sought to disguise this fact by hinting at further talks in Angora. In the Turkish explanation this grave statement followed: that Turkey had refused to give Russia an undertaking to close the Straits "in the event of war between the Soviet and the Allies." Two reflections follow; the first of them cheerful. The Turks have behaved towards France and Great Britain in the most friendly and honourable way by refusing to give this undertaking. This cannot have been an easy decision to take, for Russia is a powerful neighbour, and has hitherto lived on the most friendly and helpful terms with the Turkish Republic. We may now confidently expect that in a few days it will sign its pacts, already initiated, with the Western Powers. But another highly disturbing inference is made in some quarters. Is Stalin contemplating active military measures, which may bring him into the war against the Allies? No one knows. He may be providing for some remote contingency towards the end of the struggle. He may wish to round off his Empire in the Middle East by action against Irak or Iran. Both have oil-fields on which the Fleet depends. Or at a still earlier stage he may intend to make a forward move in the Balkans against Rumania, which might then invoke the British guarantee. It may be that Stalin's policy is still fluid and undecided, but active belligerency is not excluded. The fidelity of the Turks to their bond is at any rate a considerable factor that should help to keep him neutral.

Russia's Northern Sphere

The conference of the three Scandinavian Kings with the Finnish President in Stockholm may have been called primarily to help Finland in her dealings with Moscow. But a disquieting report from neutral sources suggests that Stalin, after establishing a protectorate over the Baltic States, may have designs also on Scandinavia. This is, it is guessed, the subject of the personal correspondence now going on between Hitler and Stalin. Stalin, it is said, demands that Germany shall recognise that Sweden and Norway, but not Denmark, belong to the Russian sphere of influence. In particular Russia would occupy and fortify the Aaland Isles. In return Russia offers to build warplanes and submarines for Germany. This does not sound altogether impossible, when one recalls how literally Germany has been driven to sell out from the Baltic States. In that case also she received a material consideration, in the shape of 17½ tons of Russian gold, something, that is to say, over £5,000,000. On the other hand, this suggestion about the Aaland Isles goes far beyond what Moscow has demanded from Finland, which was merely the right to inspect these islands, in order to make sure that they shall remain unfortified. It is not clear whether Moscow intends to make any direct claim upon Norway and Sweden, or whether she asks only that the Germans shall recognise that both shores of the Baltic fall within her exclusive sphere of interests. Backed by a remarkable diplomatic intervention by the United States, Finland remains firm without imprudence. She arms, but continues to negotiate. It is likely that she will agree to cede Hogland and the other small islets that command Kronstadt and the approach to Leningrad, but she asks for compensation in Carelia on her eastern frontier. That she will allow herself to be coerced into any treaty of alliance like those imposed on the Baltic States is highly improbable. The moral of these proceedings is clear enough. In the jungle that is our continent to-day, amid armed Empires that no treaty can bind, only a Great Power can be independent. The rest survive on sufferance, or balance themselves on a frayed and sagging rope. For them the only hope of salvation lies in a federal Europe.

Elections and Democracy

The Government's Bill for the suspension of Local Elections and Local Registration applies only up to the end of 1940; but from Sir John Anderson's speech it is clearly intended to prolong it if the war goes on, and to hold no further elections until after peace has been made. We are surprised to find the Labour Party fully acquiescing in these proposals, and merely demanding that a General Election for Parliament shall be held immediately after the end of hostilities in order to give the people a chance of pronouncing on the terms of peace. Has the Labour Party so forgotten the General Election of 1918, at which the cries of "Hang the Kaiser!" and "Make Germany

Pay" swept the country, as to believe that the weeks immediately after the end of fighting will be a favourable time for cool and dispassionate consideration of the terms of peace, or indeed of anything at all? We would sooner trust a war-time electorate to vote in by-elections as need arose than the whole people in the atmosphere likely to prevail at such a time. We therefore hope that the Labour Party is not bound to observe a by-election truce for as long as the war lasts. As for local elections, we should have thought that it would have been much the best course to let them go on. Even if they could not be fully representative, as Mr. Greenwood argued, Councils renewed by imperfect elections would surely be better representatives of public opinion than Councils not renewed at all. We deplore the present tendency of many local authorities to hand over all their powers to Emergency Committees, and stop meeting altogether; and we are very glad the London County Council is to resume its meetings in spite of the difficulties. Effective local government activity is one of the most valuable remaining safeguards of democracy in war-time.

Soaring Prices

The rise of ten points in the cost of living (twelve points in the cost of food alone) during September is the more disquieting because it occurred under conditions of State control. A part of the increase is, of course, due to the higher cost of imports owing to the depreciation of sterling; and something is also attributable to the emergency budget. But these causes fall very far short of explaining the all-round increase. Insurance of stocks under the compulsory scheme is another factor in certain cases; and some allowance must be made for disorganisation of transport, creating artificial scarcities—for example, in the case of fish. The biggest percentage rises are 47 per cent. for sugar, 29 per cent. for fish, 19 per cent. for eggs and salt butter, 12 per cent. for fresh butter, and 10 per cent. for bacon. Since the beginning of October there have been further advances; and it is not to be wondered at that the Trade Unions, which would much prefer low prices to higher wages, are getting restive—the more so because there is apt to be a long lag between higher prices and higher wages even where a sliding scale system is in force. The cotton operatives as well as the miners and railwaymen are now pressing for wage advances; and there is bound to be a general movement unless the increase in prices is promptly checked. At any rate, the Government ought to explain what its price policy is to be. Mere promises to prosecute profiteers—by what looks like a hopeless, cumbrous procedure—are beside the point. What is needed is a settled policy of checking the rise in prices at a definite point, and an effective control designed to implement such a policy.

A Meagre Diet

The Government, fired at by Mr. Amery, Lady Astor, and Mrs. Tate, as well as by Mr. Tom Williams and other Labour spokesmen, had a bad time in the debate on war allowances on Tuesday. Mr. Williams drew a forcible contrast between the payments made for evacuated children and the sums allowed to the wives and families of men on military service. A wife with four children, he pointed out, got 35*s.* to live on, including the money for the rent; and the payment for the fourth child worked out at 1*s.* a week. A Canadian soldier's wife with four children got, not 35*s.*, but £4 12*s.* 2*d.* Mr. Foot followed these charges with an attack on the inadequacy of the proposed disability pensions; and throughout the debate not a single unofficial speaker defended the Government's attitude. Captain Crookshank and Sir W. Womersley, replying for the Government, referred the complainants to the U.A.B., which had power to deal with hard cases, and promised the appointment of a War Pensions Advisory Committee. They promised to take the debate into consideration, and to bring forward proposals later. The critics, entirely unsatisfied, continue to press for a system of rent allowances and for an immediate increase in the scale for children, which is plainly inconsistent with the minimum nutritional needs of the larger families, and markedly ungenerous even for families of more normal size.

A Week's Warfare

In every field, land, air and sea, the Germans have reacted perceptibly to Mr. Chamberlain's rejection of Hitler's peace-offer, but their operations are not yet on a great scale. The sinking of the battleship *Royal Oak* by a submarine, while she lay at anchor in Scapa Flow, was an astonishing feat of daring and professional skill, as Mr. Churchill very handsomely conceded. The loss by drowning of 810 brave men out of a crew of 1,234 has reminded us poignantly that this slow-moving war of endurance has its major tragedies. German planes have scored their first success against a warship by direct hits inflicted on the *Iron Duke*; she, however, was an obsolete battleship which had been "demilitarised" by the removal both of her heavy guns and of much of her protective armour: even so she was only "damaged" and there were no casualties. Equally negative in their results were the numerous appearances during the week of German planes along the East Coast. The only attack was made on Rosyth and the ships that lay in the Forth: the sinking of an empty cutter was their only success. The Forth Bridge, a huge target, was untouched. In this raid the A.A.F. brought down three out of four planes. In two days eight out of thirty attacking planes were destroyed. Mr. Churchill's policy in publishing the news of naval losses promptly and truthfully is to be commended. We are the more ready to accept his comforting view of the success of the Fleet's hunt for U-boats. Some twenty out of a probable sixty are believed to have been destroyed since the war started. In France our Expeditionary Force has now taken over its sector of the line. Though heavy concentrations of German troops were reported between the Moselle and the Saar, they have not yet attempted a major offensive, nor is it likely that they will now do so. They were content to drive back most of the French outposts, which had occupied advanced positions on German soil, mainly for purposes of observation. The probability is that air and sea warfare, mainly directed against Britain, will continue without large scale operations on the Western Front.

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MUDDLE

"THE most surprising appointment since the Emperor Caligula made his horse a Consul," someone remarked when Mr. Chamberlain made Sir Thomas Inskip Minister of Co-ordination. The quip comes back to mind when Sir John Gilmour is brought from his retirement to become the Minister of Shipping. Certainly no appointment in modern times has more surprised the public. Sir John has a colourless reputation as an exceedingly undistinguished ex-Minister, who was believed to have given way some time ago to younger men. First-class talent was at Mr. Chamberlain's service for this vital post, and the new Ministry offered a remarkable opportunity for bringing in new blood. Sir Arthur Salter made his great reputation in the last war largely by his work in Allied shipping control; his appointment, if he had been willing to accept, would have been an excellent stroke of business. So obviously is Sir John Gilmour not the right person for the job that we are inevitably set asking ourselves what can have induced Mr. Chamberlain to appoint him.

The question, once put, seems easy to answer. Sir John Gilmour must surely have been appointed *because* of his unsuitability, and not in spite of it. The shipping interests, it is well known, pressed strongly that one of themselves should be made Minister of Shipping, in order that State control of the industry might be kept well in the family. Mr. Chamberlain could not assent to this, on account of the suspicion that would inevitably have been evoked. So he did the next thing by appointing a *fainéant* Minister, and putting in a leading shipowner to act as Controller, and do the real job. The shipping interests thus get what they want—call it politely "self-government" under State control; and yet Mr. Chamberlain can say, with his hand on his heart, that he has appointed as Minister an impartial guardian of the public interests.

The position is not very different in a number of "controls," established under the new emergency departments. We have no reason to believe that Mr. Burgin is a master-mind, or that his presiding genius makes itself very powerfully felt throughout the sections of the Ministry of Supply which are scattered over the country. We hear, rather, that the "controls" for which he is responsible are staffed largely by representatives of the employers' associations or combines concerned with the various commodities and branches of production. One tale after another reaches us of employees mercifully saved from unemployment by being transferred to the Government's pay-roll, and of allegations by Messrs. B, C and D that Mr. A, having got himself into a key position as the Government's agent, is happily engaged in squeezing them out. We do not take all these allegations at their face value; but there is enough independent support for some of them to make us think that they are not all due to Messrs. B, C and D's thwarted hopes of behaving in the same way.

In the Ministry of Food, over which Mr. Morrison presides, things are not going well with the various schemes under preparation for the distribution of foodstuffs. In this sphere the control has got largely into the hands of the various Marketing Boards—that is, once again, of bodies representing the producing interests. Enough went wrong with most of the marketing schemes in peacetime to make us very sceptical of the Marketing Boards' competence to organise either production or distribution in time of war. It is, moreover, inevitable that each producers' group should tend to play for its own hand: things are bound to go wrong unless there is a really strong central control over agriculture and food supply as a whole. Perhaps that is to emerge? So far all the evidence is to the contrary; in this case, too, the scattering of the various "controls" all over the country makes effective co-ordination a very difficult task.

Lord Stamp, we are now asked to believe, will put all these things right by advising the Government about the co-ordination of economic policy and presiding over a co-ordinating committee of departmental officials. We have a high respect for Lord Stamp; but can even his tireless energy enable him to co-ordinate economic policy in his spare time—after attending to the L.M.S. and his numerous other preoccupations? No one will accuse Lord Stamp of being a nonentity; but we shall only begin to believe that his appointment is likely to produce the necessary results when we hear that he has resigned from the L.M.S. and been given a seat in the War Cabinet.

Some day the incompetence shown in organising great Departments—everyone knows about the Ministry of Information—on which the entire result of the war may depend, will be realised by the public. For the time ordinary people are more concerned with the far less culpable muddles due to preparation for big-scale aerial warfare in the big towns—which, fortunately, has not taken place. Steps will also have to be taken about these muddles. It is no trivial matter that non-evacuated children are still running wild in the streets, and that the children in the reception areas are still getting, at the most favourable, much less than half an education. It is a serious situation when the medical service remains in chaos, with patients sorely in need of treatment and the doctors and surgeons impatiently waiting about with nothing to do. Nor is it a matter of indifference that the requisitioning of buildings, many of which are still standing empty, has been carried out with an apparently complete disregard, not only for anyone's convenience, but also for the continued conduct of the normal services of the country. And so on, through a whole forest of waste and confusion.

It is not enough excuse that the Government expected the war to be different. This muddle is natural to a Government which has never thought things out, and which is unable to think them out now, because it will not face the consequences. Evacuation, as a process, was well done; for that was mainly in the hands of competent under-administrators. Evacuation, as a policy, seems never to have been thought out at all. State control, as a process, is doubtless being in many cases quite competently managed, where it is being done by civil servants or skilled business executives. But State control, as a policy, also seems never to have been thought out; one process has never been related to another.

This Government is exceedingly incompetent. Having no considered policy of its own, it tells business men to carry on in the name of the State. To use the services of experienced men who know their various trades is plain common sense. But it is of the essence of the

business mind to ignore the repercussions of its actions on things with which it is not concerned—for example, other trades and the social life of the country. Hence, a patchwork of " controls " run by sectional interests is the very negation of any sort of co-ordinated planning of the national effort. What is needed is an Economic General Staff and a Home Cabinet for the planning of the nation's wartime life. Nothing short of this will do; but Mr. Chamberlain is, we fear, altogether incapable of rising to a sense of the need.

THE AMERICAN EMBARGO

[FROM AN AMERICAN CORRESPONDENT]

AT the moment of writing it seems reasonably certain that the embargo will be repealed—but not soon. No one hopes for definite action in less than a month, and some say not before Christmas. Therein lies the danger, since some unexpected turn of events abroad might have unpredictable effects on Congress. The isolationist bloc is determined to go to town with the debate. " We are going to have a bully fight," Senator Johnson, one of their leaders, promised recently. And there is no way to stop them, since even the pro-repeal Senators would not allow the " gag-law " to be invoked as President Wilson did when " a little band of wilful men " tried to out-talk his Armed Ship Bill during the last war.

The Repeal needs only a simple majority of the Senate, that is 49 votes.* All the Washington correspondents are busy tabulating their estimates of the probable Senatorial line-up. Of those sure to vote with the Administration, that is for repeal, the lowest estimate I have seen is 42 and the highest 48. Of those against repeal the highest estimate I have seen is 33. On the surface, therefore, it looks as if the Administration would have a walk-over. But it is worth remembering that a small group of Senators talked Congress into voting against America's joining the World Court, although at the time it came up for debate no one thought the isolationists had a chance.

Why do the isolationists want to keep the embargo? One of their arguments is that to change the law in wartime in favour of one side (since only the Allies could obtain American arms under the cash-and-carry or title-and-take plan) would be " unneutral." This is easily countered by the argument that the Neutrality Act as it stands is unneutral because it favours the aggressor. But the chief theme of the isolationists is that to supply arms to the belligerents would be the first step down the slippery slope to active participation in the war. The obvious answer to that is that repeal of the embargo and the supplying of arms to the Allies now would enable them to win without the U.S.A. and, therefore, lessen the chance of America getting into war. But the President cannot come out and say this, because to do so would be " unneutral."

Nevertheless, its truth is so obvious that even the Borah-bloc must recognise it. Can they be sincere, then, when they say they want to keep the embargo in order to keep the U.S.A. out of war? They are not pro-Germans (Senator Reynolds, for instance, who is, has kept himself well in the background). One explanation I have heard, from what the newspapers would call an " authoritative source," is that they are all tied to their own past. Who were the Senate isolationist leaders twenty years ago? Johnson, Borah, La Follette, Champ Clark, Lodge. Who are they now? Johnson, Borah, the son of La Follette, the son of Champ Clark, the son of Lodge. Also Vandenberg and Nye. The former has his eye on 1940 and the latter is, of course, the author of the Neutrality Act and, if he had his way, would not like to see so much as a peanut shipped across the Atlantic.

In the Administration camp, on the other hand, the presence of so many bitter Roosevelt-haters who, under other circumstances, would rather go through hell and high water than vote with the President, shows that they are acting from deep conviction. This embargo fight is, I think, the first thing in seven years that has cut across the Roosevelt issue. Senator George and Senator Tydings are the two anti-New Deal Democrats who headed the President's " purge " list last year. Mr. Roosevelt even went to Maryland to speak in person in support of Senator Tyding's rival. Yet they are both voting for repeal. Senator Carter Glass, whose passionate battle against the President's fiscal policies brought him to the verge of apoplexy, is voting for repeal. Vice-President Garner, the leader of the anti-New Deal faction within the Party, is working for repeal. Senator Taft, a leading Republican candidate for 1940, is voting for repeal. Apart from such men, the rank and file of the Democratic party votes, of course, with the Administration.

Whether the Roosevelt-haters outside Washington can bring themselves to give active support to the President in this battle is not yet clear. Certainly business and industry would benefit from repeal, but so far they do not appear to be doing any lobbying on its behalf.

And that brings up the most curious aspect of this fight. All the lobbying, all the mass meetings, all the " write-your-Congressman " campaigns, all the female " peace " delegations panting up Capitol Hill are on the other side. They are flooding the country with oratory and handbills, hammering away at the theme that " Keep the Embargo " and " Keep us out of War " are the same thing. Congress is being inundated with letters and telegrams said to be ten to one against repeal. Yet Dr. Gallup reports 57 per cent. of the public in favour of repeal, and the Fortune poll shows 36 per cent. who would send help to the Allies alone plus another 29 per cent. who favour cash-and-carry, leaving only 35 per cent. who either have no opinion or want rigid neutrality.

These figures make it perfectly obvious that, as all the Washington correspondents have pointed out, the letters to Congress against repeal are largely the product of an organised campaign. With Father Coughlin turning the crank, Mr. Henry Ford paying the bills and Colonel Lindbergh, Galahad-like, leading the cohorts, this campaign is doing itself proud. It would be ungenerous to point out that both Ford and Lindbergh have been decorated by the present German Government. Working through sincere pacifist groups, the " front " which the anti-repealers have been able to mobilise is remarkable. Look at the list of sponsors for a mass meeting which is to be held here to-morrow night: Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, National Council for Prevention of War, Fellowship of Reconciliation, War Resisters League, Keep America Out of War Congress, Youth Committee Against War, World Peaceways and World Peace Commission of the Methodist Church and the Church of the Brethren.

Why is there no comparable campaign for repeal? Why is there no sign of the sort of fight that was put up to lift the embargo on Spain? (I wonder does Whitehall remember the embargo on Spain with any irony now?) The answer, I think, lies in the disorganisation of the Left since the Russo-German Pact. Campaigns, no matter what they are for, don't just happen; they have to be organised. And it would be up to the Left to do it because the Democratic Party can't—the fight must be kept non-partisan—big business is apparently scared and all the peace and patriot groups are on the other side. But the Left is in no state to organise anything at this moment. The Communists are out—their extraordinary maladroitness following the announcement of the Pact was embarrassing to watch—and their galvanising energy is missed.

*Our correspondent wrote before the proposal had been made in the United States Senate on October 10th that the Neutrality Bill should be divided in half, so as to separate the proposed repeal of the arms embargo from the remaining provisions. The effect of this would have been to make easier the passage of the " cash and carry " clauses, at the cost of making much more difficult the repeal of the embargo on the export of arms. The defeat of this amendment, which was generally regarded as likely to be fatal to the repeal of the embargo, by 65 votes to 26, was the first trial of strength on the Bill in the Senate, and is regarded as having materially improved its chances.

And to a great many other people of all shades of opinion there is still "something phoney" about this war. That is perhaps an ungracious thing for an American to say when Englishmen and French are in the trenches. But the feeling exists, although future events may dissipate it.

New York,
September 28th, 1939.

TRADE UNIONISM IN WARTIME

WHEN war broke out in 1914 one of its outstanding immediate effects was to dislocate the labour market and cause widespread unemployment. So much was this the case that the Trade Unions and the Labour movement generally were largely preoccupied during the early months of the war with devising and forcing upon the Government measures for the relief of distress among the unemployed. This was, of course, the more necessary because in 1914 unemployment insurance extended only to a few trades, and the poor law was the only other provision available for those who were left without resources. Nowadays, with unemployment insurance extending to most classes of workers except domestic servants and the "intellectual proletariat," and with the U.A.B. catering for most of those who are not covered by insurance, there cannot be the same call for emergency measures of relief. But the situation is also quite different in another respect; for the present war was preceded by an intensive period of war preparation, so that much less shifting of workers is needed in order to adjust the national economy to war conditions. Nor has unemployment appeared on anything like the same scale as it did in 1914, though there are areas in which large numbers have been thrown out of work, and certain types of workers, such as domestic servants and "black-coats," have been hard hit by the flight of private residents and businesses from London and some other large towns. There are very serious hardships in many places, but they are offset in the statistics by increased employment elsewhere.

In the last war it was some time before a shortage of labour made itself felt except here and there in the case of highly skilled workers. But among the highly skilled the shortage fairly soon became serious. This was largely because, under the voluntary system of recruitment for the armed forces, no attempt at all was made, at any rate in the earlier stages, to prevent highly skilled men from enlisting in the army, even when their services would have been much more valuable at home. Of coal miners and of certain types of highly skilled engineers and shipbuilders there was soon a very short supply, so that steps had even to be taken to bring back some of them from the army in order to keep up the supply of munitions and prevent too sharp a fall in the output of other essential goods. It is true that, in the later stages of the war, some of these men were again "combed-out"; but that was only after there had been time to readjust industry on a basis which economised greatly in the use of skilled workers.

On the present occasion, due care had been taken well before the war began to draw up schedules of reserved occupations, and to plan the output not only of munitions, but also of other essential goods, well in advance as far as the supply of workers was concerned. The introduction of military compulsion naturally made this very much easier; for even if the supply of skilled workers in some years' time is likely to suffer seriously as a consequence of the mass enlistment of the great majority of the younger men, the immediate effects on output-capacity are much less than those of an indiscriminate process of voluntary enlistment. Even under compulsion, output must, of course, suffer increasingly as more workers in the prime of manhood are taken away; but it becomes comparatively simple to retain in industry the key-workers who are of most importance for its maintenance under the immediate pressure of war needs.

In drawing up the schedules of reserved occupations the Trade Unions have, of course, been consulted; and they are now busy negotiating with the Minister of Labour and National Service about the steps which are to be taken in applying "dilution" where it is needed and in providing for the substitution of less skilled or female workers where a shortage of labour makes itself felt. Some industries are already facing quite special complications—above all others, waterside transport; for the diversion of a large proportion of seagoing trade from the eastern to the western ports of Great Britain makes necessary emergency provisions for the transference of skilled stevedores, dockers and other waterside workers, either temporarily for particular jobs or "for the duration." In this instance, the Transport and General Workers' Union and the other Unions concerned have already entered into national arrangements for transference, including free travelling facilities from port to port and the payment of emergency allowances to men transferred. No other industry has had, so far, to face a quite similar problem; but, if the war goes on, it is very possible that large movements of production will also become necessary, and in that event similar arrangements will doubtless have to be made.

One great preoccupation of the Trade Unions, in facing war conditions, is to avoid as far as possible the dislocation of the established practices of collective bargaining which they have built up with the various bodies of employers. One reason (though not the only one) why the Unions dislike compulsory arbitration is that it interferes with their normal methods of arranging matters with the employers; and, again, one reason for their dislike of military conscription is their fear that, by leading to at any rate a partial industrial conscription it may have a similar effect. The Trade Unions have spent so much time and energy in creating the systems of collective bargaining which now exist in most industries that they are very loth to have them in any way disturbed—even to the extent of appearing extremely conservative when new methods of organisation are proposed, and of seeming to prefer to take the employers' side against many measures of State intervention which would upset their traditional practices. This conservatism of the Unions about systems of "recognition," which have cost them great and prolonged struggles to win, is an important fact to be taken into account in estimating Trade Union policies in time of war.

The Unions want to keep their methods of collective bargaining as far as possible intact; but they want also to secure recognition of a further claim which employers have always rejected in time of peace. They demand that, where the State is taking in hand the reorganisation of industry in the national interest and under public control, it shall deal not only with the employers, who normally claim the right to direct economic policy, but also with the representatives of the workers. In other words, the Unions claim to be consulted not only about the "dilution," "substitution," and "transference" of labour, but also about all measures which the State is proposing to take for the control of industry, the regulation of profits, the rationing of supplies—and indeed about every major question of economic policy.

This claim, it will be remembered, was advanced strongly during the last war; and when, in 1917, the "Whitley" Committee made the famous report on which the Whitley Councils were based in the period of post-war reconstruction, it was suggested that the new machinery would go a long way towards satisfying Trade Union aspirations. But in fact Whitley Councils were never set up for most of the major industries; and, where they were, the idea that they could become instruments for the joint determination of economic policy by "Capital" and "Labour" speedily faded away. "Joint control" came soon to be recognised as impracticable in face of the employers' quite understandable insistence that whoever took the risks of profit and loss must also finally decide what was to be done.

One great difference between war and peace conditions is that in wartime, over a large section of industry, the risk of loss practically disappears, and the question that remains is how much profit the employer is to be allowed to make and

to retain. When the State becomes the final arbiter, it is reasonable for the Trade Unions to maintain that their point of view ought to be considered equally with the employers', and to claim representation on whatever bodies are set up to allocate supplies, determine priorities, and in general reorganise industry on a war footing. Even if " joint control " is unworkable under capitalism in time of peace, that does not mean that the Government in time of war can regard the employers' as the only interest to be considered when matters of economic organisation are to be decided.

If this claim is conceded, it is not the less important to ensure that State control shall be real State control; it must not be a device for handing over the powers of the State to private interests, even if these interests include the Trade Unions. The vital decisions ought to be taken impartially by representatives of the public, after full consultation with the interests affected by them. Nor can a leading employer, or for that matter a leading Trade Unionist, be regarded as being changed automatically into a watchdog of the consuming public simply because he has become a temporary civil servant. It is essential that persons not normally concerned with the running of the various industries should be put in final charge of their wartime administration.

If these principles are kept in mind, it should be possible to arrange for the mobilisation of this country's industrial man-power much more smoothly in this war than in the last great war, especially if it is found possible to avoid any legal restrictions which would tie the hands of Trade Union executives, and thus inevitably lead to the emergence of unofficial " rank and file " movements. It will be much better to avoid, if we can, both compulsory arbitration and any formal declaration of an " industrial truce," and to carry on with the normal processes of collective bargaining, merely adapting them to the changed conditions, and not superseding them by emergency laws imposed from outside. Friction there will be, in any circumstances; but it is likely to be handled most easily if the hands of Trade Unionism are left free, and it is given a prominent part to play in the tasks of wartime organisation without being so shackled that its members can no longer regard it as a sufficient guardian of their rights.

A LONDON DIARY

" EVERYTHING is possible but nothing is likely," said a friend to me the other day, and that is the best short summary of the position I have yet heard. There are very few prophecies that I would care to make in the present situation. Here is one. The Germans are not likely to make a big attack in the West during the winter months. They will only recapture the ground lost on the Saar, which, as the communiqués make clear, the French do not expect to hold. They will continue attacks on British shipping and military objectives and they will continue to make peace offers. The British are in a weak position until they themselves lay down terms on which peace would be possible. We shall gain far more sympathy with the rest of the world and far more unity at home when we translate Mr. Chamberlain's phrase about making a new world into something more concrete. I do not think we can expect the Government to give us a detailed list of war aims in the present circumstances—that is impossible—but they ought to take action which shows that we are not fighting merely for the preservation of the *status quo*. India is the most obvious test. How can we pretend to be fighting for democracy, if during the war, the Hindu population has to be coerced by the British Army? Remember that Congress offered co-operation. As it was, Mr. Chamberlain's reply to Hitler was only a dignified exercise in negation. That it would begin with a refusal of Hitler's terms, if they could be called such, was obvious, but to me and to many others it was lamentable that it contained no positive and hopeful side. Theoretically, it did not slam the door, because there was a suggestion that if Germany would give some guarantee of good faith, negotiations might be possible, but one does not know what sort of guarantee is intended. Can one take seriously phrases about fighting for a new social order when they come from this Government? A conception of this new order is the thing we need above all whether war goes on or peace of some kind proves feasible. " Morale " does not mean war-fever—of which, in fact, there is no sign among the British. It means having something positive to hope for and live for; when people have that, they also have something for which they are prepared in the last resort to die.

* * *

Everyone ought to read Hansard nowadays. If you want to know how much alive Parliament is you should read last week's debate on propaganda and the Ministry of Information. There are two reasons why this particular Ministry has come in for such a special dose of criticism. The first is that the muddles in it cannot be hushed up like those in the Ministry of Supply or Agriculture. If news gets released and then censored and then released again and if there are 999 public employees doing nothing very obvious, the public is bound to know. The second reason is that the press has always disliked the idea of a Ministry of Information; like the B.B.C. it is a possible rival and enemy. Outside the press some of the bitterest critics of the Ministry are men who applied for jobs in it and failed to get them. The first result of criticism was to put an end to the potentially valuable but overstaffed regional organisation and to move the censorship from Bloomsbury to Whitehall. Journalists who now have to run round in the dark from one Service department to another are very dubious whether this last change is any gain. Its only object was to enable the Ministry to report a reduction in staff, which was, of course, no real reduction at all. But the axe is now falling with a vengeance; one department has completely disappeared overnight and others have been ordered to reduce staff by one third. All this, as far as I can see, without any regard for the real needs of publicity. The axe is a Treasury axe and the big trees at the top remain unscathed. Naturally civil servants who are on the Government pay roll but who may really be the obstructionists are kept, while specialists who have been biting their nails in frustration for seven weeks are sacked with a stain on their character. Some of the ablest are resigning.

* * *

The real deficiencies of the Ministry have not been generally understood, though they were explained in very able speeches in the Commons by John Parker, and Noel Baker, and Henry Brooke. You should contrast their speeches with the sneers of Mr. Andrew MacLaren who raised a mean laugh by personal attacks on individuals who could not reply. May I summarise the real situation? (1) The whole organisation is misconceived, because, if the object is a centre of information which will answer Dr. Goebbels, Civil Service technique is absurd. The point of a Civil Service department is not to make mistakes. Every document goes through a number of hands, is carefully examined, and decision is taken after the circulation of innumerable memoranda. Personal responsibility is at a minimum. But a Ministry that wishes to counter Dr. Goebbels should be organised like a general staff or like a newspaper, where each job is one man's responsibility and where he is liable to be thrown out on his ear if it goes wrong. Can you conceive of these civil servants and retired army officers—often excellent men at their old jobs—working in all the hurry and apparent chaos of an evening paper which has to rush out an edition in two hours' time? The need all the time is quick decision. (2) The head of such a Department should not be a judge, who is trained not to make up his mind till the hearing is complete and all the evidence has been sifted, but a younger man, experienced in the methods of publicity. Lord Macmillan is an able and enlightened person, but the Minister of Information should not be in the House of Lords; he should be on an equality with the Service Ministers and in the House of Commons.

(3) Men dealing with cinema publicity should know something about films—one of the film staff had never heard of the *March of Time* and had not been in a cinema for two years—and the man who collaborates with the B.B.C. should not be a first-class expert on the cotton industry. (3) No adequate thought seems to have been given to the business of stating Britain's case abroad. I suspect that here, as in many other cases, the fault is not with people in the Ministry, but with the censorship and ultimately with the Government which has provided no drive and evinced no serious desire to "tell the world." The facts revealed in the debate about the flood of German news, which is reaching neutral countries, and in particular America, and the complete failure of Britain even to get proper publicity, are really heart-breaking. Even more distressing is the wording of the leaflets which were dropped over Germany, sometimes in bad German, clumsily written by someone with no specialised knowledge of German psychology. And that someone was not in the Ministry of Information.

* * *

I wonder how many of my readers know where the title of Huxley's new novel (*After Many a Summer*) comes from? I didn't myself at first. It is from Tennyson's *Tithonus*:

> And after many a summer dies the swan.
> Me only cruel immortality
> Consumes, I wither slowly in thine arms
> Here at the quiet limit of the world.

It is the poem about the mortal to whom the gods granted eternal life but forgot to add eternal youth. So he became helplessly old and his immortality was a curse to him. Picking titles out of poems, as one picks flowers out of an herbaceous border, is a pretty new device. A. S. M. Hutchinson, I think, started it with *If Winter Comes*. Before then titles were usually either just names of heroes or of places (*John Inglesant*, *The Mill on the Floss*, *Martin Chuzzlewit*) or indications of the moral you might expect from the book (*It's Never Too Late to Mend*, *Great Expectations*, *Pride and Prejudice*). The advantage of the Poetic Tag as title is that it touches (or should touch—who recognised *Eyeless in Gaza*?) a matted net of memories in the reader as well as suggesting a moral without the embarrassment of sententiousness. Huxley has the additional advantage of having found a poem which will provide an excellent series of titles merely by reading straight on. The books almost write themselves:—*Me Only* (autobiography of Mr. Godfrey Winn, or a sequel to *Mein Kampf*, perhaps) *Cruel Immortality Consumes* (surely a better title for Huxley's current novel than his own), *I Wither Slowly* (a Marxian description of the State) *In Thine Arms* (a novel by any one of the imitators of Elinor Glyn) or perhaps some meditations by an outmoded Anglican clergyman) *Here at the Quiet Limit of the World* (Peter Fleming's next travel book). . .

* * *

What an extraordinary spectacle this is! Thousands of children in the towns with no schools to go to, playing in the streets by day and, often not so innocently, by night. No organisation, no discipline, nothing to interest or guide them. You ask why the schools are not opening again? Because the Government very naturally thinks that numbers of children in a building offer too good a target for the bomber, and because if the schools open the slow drift back to the towns will be immediately intensified. Something is now being done, something strangely unorganised and primitive. Parents are being asked to lend a room for lessons and small classes are organised in them. I have just come across a L.C.C. teacher, who is authorised to walk about the streets, find children playing and ask them whether they would like to come to school. Having collected a contingent, he takes them to a house and gives them lessons and then gives another half a dozen a turn of school. Sometimes he collects the children round a pile of sandbags. Really, Hitler does put us to a lot of inconvenience. As a young woman remarked the other day, "It's a perfect scream of a war!"

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Donald McCairn.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

There are occasions when it is wise to disregard the old counsel *de mortuis nihil nisi bonum*, and this is one of them. It is both appropriate and necessary to record that Freud's unhealthy obsession with sex has been responsible to an overwhelming extent for the depravity of mind and perversity of taste that has affected, among others, English people and particularly English women since the last war. In itself a sufficiently grave evil, this result has had consequences immeasurably malignant, for it undoubtedly paved the way for wide acceptance of that complete Jewish ideology out of which sprang bolshevism, nazism and the present war.—Letter in *Lancet*.

Dogs are having a nervous time just now. Their meat allowances are being gradually reduced to meet the rationing, they are having to get used to compressed meats and other substitutes. And at the same time they are getting buffeted in the hours of the black-out. Marshall and Snelgrove are having great success with their black-out coats for dogs. Costing half a guinea, they are made in white gleaming fabric with an occasional red spot, and they not only show up the dog, so that he shall not be trodden on, but they add bells to announce his coming. Add, too, your dog's identity disc, and, even if he should stray, you can feel that he is safe.—*Observer*.

I hear that the Censorship, which is housed in a fastness "somewhere near London," has a staff that is socially as well as intellectually gifted.

There are, for instance, Lady Bridgett Poulett and Mrs. Rosemary Horlick, as well as a number of ex-City men and erudite ex-officials. —*Evening Standard*.

Blackout.—Carry a White Pekinese . . .—Advert. in *Daily Telegraph*.

THE DECAY OF LYING

OSCAR WILDE once wrote an essay called *The Decay of Lying*. It is a good many years since I read it, but, so far as I can remember, Wilde deplored the diminution of lying as a sign of the failure of the human imagination and traced much that was wrong with American culture at the time to the fact that the national hero of the American people was a man who even in boyhood admitted that he could not tell a lie. I forget whether Wilde regarded the decay of lying as merely a temporary phenomenon or whether he looked on the world as permanently doomed to the dullness of veracity. If he was a pessimist on the latter scale, how magnificently events have belied his prophecy! If he returned to earth to-day, he would find the world a playground of lying beyond the dreams of Munchausen.

There are, of course, many reasons for lying and for not lying. The chief reasons for not lying are either lack of the necessary talent, as with George Washington, or failure from some honourable or prudential reason to develop the gift. As for the chief reasons for lying, they are, I imagine, love of lying for its own sake, fear of causing other people pain, fear of enduring pain or indeed any kind of trouble oneself, and the necessity of manufacturing propaganda. Of these the fear of causing other people pain is perhaps the most commendable. If one's lie seems to work like salve on a wound, it seldom keeps one awake at night afterwards owing to the prickings of one's conscience. I think Tolstoy maintained that, if a would-be murderer asked you whether you had seen his intended victim going along a road, you had no right, even if he had a gun in his hand, to tell him a lie. In such cases I regard the liar as the moral man. It is not good to tell a lie, but it is better to tell a lie than to be an accomplice in a murder, and to tell the truth in such circumstances is to be an accomplice. Truth, in fact, like patriotism, is not enough. If telling the truth will only lead to an immoral end, it is better to be economical with the truth. Who, if he were sheltering a fugitive from justice, would feel a better man after admitting

to his pursuers that the man was upstairs in his house? That is one test of how far it is right to tell the truth.

Lying for the love of lying is another matter. With many people it is merely the result of egotism. There are men and women who cannot bear to admit that anyone has had more interesting experiences than themselves. I once knew a man who, if you told him of some extraordinary thing that had happened to you, would, after listening attentively, say to you: "My dear fellow, exactly the same thing happened to myself," and would proceed to cap your story with a story still more extraordinary. Tell him that you had been warned in a dream not to pass a certain wall, and that the next day the wall had collapsed and killed a man, and he immediately invented a story about a premonition which had once prevented him from travelling on an American train which had afterwards plunged into an abyss with the loss of hundreds of lives. If you told him that you had once had tea with the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, he would have trumped your ace by recalling the jorums of Burgundy he had drunk when dining with the Archbishop of Canterbury. And he would have given the Archbishop an excellent reputation as a man who drank glass for glass. He had a poker face and always wore a top hat, and, with these aids to deception, invariably travelled on the railways without a ticket. To do this, of course, he had to travel first-class. He had a genius for deception, and loved the game, and deceived everybody except his friends.

Another man I knew—he also always travelled first-class but never bought a first-class ticket—took a particular pleasure in posing as some famous or important person to strangers. He told me that he once found himself in a railway compartment with an agreeable stranger to whom he confided the fact that he was an actor by profession and, on being asked his name, replied, "Charles Warner"—a Victorian actor who, though now all but forgotten, approached greatness. The stranger seemed greatly interested in his conversation, asked him about the parts he had played, and how he liked playing them, and by the time the train reached London my friend had probably told more lies than an ordinary Englishman tells in a lustre. As they parted, the stranger handed him his card, on which, to the consternation of my friend, was the name "Seymour Hicks." Of course, even this part of the story may have been a lie. When my friend was lying and when he was not lying, nobody except himself ever knew, if even he knew.

George Borrow, I suppose, might fairly be classed with this kind of liar. And a good many other writers of books of reminiscences. Reminiscence is, perhaps, the most common form of lying. To a greater and greater extent it has become a branch of imaginative literature.

Lying to avoid trouble, is, except to the psychologist, less interesting. There is little entertainment—and no edification—to be had from the perjuries of the law-courts. I am enough of a Victorian to believe that, to shelter a woman's name, even perjury is permissible. Not that I had ever occasion to shelter a woman's name, but I used to read novels about men who did. As for the ordinary perjurer, however, he is too self-centred to be attractive. He lies, not from imaginative delight, but from self-interest. Sometimes he is even paid to lie—a mere hack. Some years ago, a magistrate in Ceylon, disgusted by the contradictions in the evidence of one of the witnesses, said to the lawyer: "Call your next liar." How often and in how many countries magistrates and judges might with good reason have been as frank! Even people as advanced in the scale of civilisation as motorists are tempted to lie when they get into law-courts. Heirs to the science and invention of ages, they are also manifestly, when once they appear in court, heirs to Ananias and Sapphira. Lord Hewart once said that he had for years been trying motoring cases in which two cars, each of them on the right side of the road and each of them stationary, had been involved in a head-on collision. Oscar Wilde, I think, would have liked to live to hear that—to realise that, in spite of the signs of its decay with the disappearance of the horse, lying had experienced a conspicuous renaissance with the arrival of the motor-car. Imagination has come into its own again.

Of all the forms of lying which have graced our age, however, none, I think, would have had more attraction for Wilde than what is called propaganda. There has never been lying quite like this before. The skill with which every instrument for making the truth universally known—the printing-press and, more particularly, the wireless—has been perverted into a means of disseminating lies will surely seem to posterity all but miraculous. Herr Hitler, however, decided many years ago that without lying his cause had little chance of success and, with the intensity of a man of genius, he built up a policy of deliberate truthlessness. I should not myself call him a liar, as accusations of the kind only lead to *tu quoques*, but he has made it clear enough in *Mein Kampf* that he is sincerely convinced that where propaganda begins, truth ends. He even praises the English for the brilliant effectiveness of their lying in the last war, and counsels Germans to follow so noble an example.

I think it was Lord Ponsonby who said that in war truth is the first victim. The Nazis decided that in this matter what was good enough for war was good enough for peace, and even school-histories were falsified as school-histories—and this is saying a lot—had never been falsified before. Newspapers became the means of hiding the truth from the German people, who were taught to regard themselves as the innocent victims of foreign warmongers and of Jews on the home front in 1918. Germany had never tried to starve England into surrender with submarines; but England had starved Germany into surrender with the blockade. And so on.

And now, having mastered their own people with this kind of propaganda, the Nazis are trying propaganda equally imaginative on the English people over the wireless. Their broadcasts in English are one of the most curious of the many curious features of the present war. Some people say the Nazi propaganda in English is effective, but my own experience is that no one takes it seriously. People get tired of hearing about the sinking of the *Ark Royal* when they know that it has not been sunk at all; and, after Herr Hitler's confession of his belief in the necessity of a drum-fire of lies, even if it had been sunk, no one would believe it on such questionable authority. Still, it cannot be denied that Dr. Goebbels and his fellow-Nazis have done much to recreate the imaginative life of Europe. If a Nazi George Washington had cut down a cherry-tree, he would have denied the deed boldly and sworn that an Englishman or a Jew was the arboricide. I am sure that, if Wilde were alive to-day, he would feel reassured. Man, whatever he may have been in the nineties, is once again an imaginative animal.

Y. Y.

DRANG NACH DEUTSCHLAND

German nationals are being expelled from the Baltic States. Similar action is expected elsewhere.—News item.

TEUTONS come to the Führer's call.
Sieg Heil!
His Reich has *Lebensraum* for all.
Sieg Heil!
With yet one more dynamic stroke
The Führer frees his far-flung Folk,
The Nordic blood snaps the ape man's yoke!
Sieg Heil!

From all the earth's subhuman States,
Bravo!
The Reich her own repatriates.
Bravo!
No Balt, blood-brother to the brute,
The Teuton now shall persecute—
The Nordic flower seeks the Nordic root.
Bravo!

Back to the Reich from the Balkan bloc,
Hurra !
To its sacred soil streams the German stock.
Hurra !
As far away under Roosevelt's lash,
The Nordic Breed spurns the mongrel trash—
It can hardly wait for the homeward dash.
Hurra !

No Power shall stem that primal thrust,
Nicht wahr ?
You can't see the Ruling Race for dust,
Nicht wahr ?
Her tortured children the Reich has won,
The *Drang nach Deutschland* has begun,
And a crashing good thing for everyone.
Nicht wahr ?

SAGITTARIUS

Miscellany

THE HONOUR AND DIGNITY OF THE FREE MIND

By H. G. WELLS

The Annual Congress of the International P.E.N. Club was to have been held in Stockholm from September 4th to September 7th, 1939. At first I was disinclined to attend and would not undertake to give a lecture, but as the world crisis developed I realised that it afforded the possibility of a clear public assertion of the supreme value of the creative mind. I prepared the following address and asked the Secretary of the Congress to afford me facilities for a semi-public delivery. But as the war crisis became intense, first one group and then another decided not to attend and the Congress was finally abandoned. The world-intelligence organisation evaporated, promising to materialise again on a more favourable occasion. I went to Stockholm for a day or so nevertheless and I discussed the world situation with one or two writers who had already gathered there. Under the circumstances, however, my address reads rather like a companion piece to Max Beerbohm's remarkable caricature of Walt Whitman exhorting the American eagle to soar. The Stockholm P.E.N. Club never flapped a wing. In the words of the Great English poet, it "softly and silently vanished away. For the Club *was* a Boojum, you see."

An Address which was not delivered in Stockholm

THE P.E.N. Club is an organisation which has come to realise its possible functions as it has grown, and developed responsibilities from unpretentious beginnings. Let me not exaggerate its realities. I could wish that it included all the literary and artistic and scientific and educational and journalistic people in the world. Or at least that it could gather all the stars of those activities into its constellation. Then, indeed, it would be a power.

But as the stars in the intellectual and artistic world have temperaments and individualities and *amour propre* and a touchiness, it is almost in their nature not to combine but to go off at the slightest excuse, at a tangent. We of the P.E.N. Club are as representative as we can be. We deplore our deserters, our abstainers, we deplore a sort of snobbishness that keeps many a tender, if gifted, egotism aloof from us, but that must not deter us from speaking and acting plainly as the voice of the free, mental and creative activities of mankind.

There is no other body able to undertake this task.

In its beginnings the P.E.N. Club made no such claim. It implied rather than asserted the world republic of art, literature and thought. It confined itself mainly to pleasant social encounters, to travel, sight-seeing and an interchange of services, because it did not realise that its assumption of the supremacy of culture and civilisation in human affairs could be challenged. It thought that was being taken care of elsewhere. Stress was laid, therefore, on local colour and local interests.

Now there is a great darkening of the face of human affairs, and we realise that what were the tacit assumptions of our early days have, in this gathering darkness, to come into the foreground of our minds.

In the past we have stressed our character as national representatives. It is possible that we have stressed that side of life too much. Too much stress has been laid on the national aspect of cultural life. I have beside me two little books as an example. They represent two collections of pictures that were, I suppose, intended to bring out something national in art. They are both called *Contemporary Art of 79 Countries*. One collection was displayed at the Great Exhibition at San Francisco and the other in New York. From each one of 79 separate countries a picture and an artist had been selected to represent the national artistic bent. You have the national art of France exemplified by one picture, the national art of Wales by one picture, the artistic achievement of Trinidad, of Yugoslavia, of China, Costa Rica and Jamaica. The painting of each of these communities is represented as being something authentic, distinctive, separable. So that you can institute comparisons, set up rivalries, develop a sense of difference, do picture deals, insist upon patriotic purchases and aesthetic boycots.

These pictures have been painted under very variable conditions of light, colour, atmosphere and social stimulation, but it becomes plain at once to anyone who turns over these pages that this super localisation of art is absurd. They demonstrate, if the fact needed demonstration, that painting is one thing throughout the world. It is a great International, radiating mainly from the studios of Paris.

No doubt you could divide the world into distinctive regions, regions where, for instance, the light is cold and colour becomes a craved-for indulgence like strong drink ; and others where strength of colour is mere matter of fact ; but these regions, you will find, have nothing to do with political, social and racial boundaries. They are provinces in one common republic of art whose citizens move about freely.

I suspect that what I have said of painting applies equally to music. Here I speak very ignorantly. Our varied world presents regions and localities with distinctive noise systems, and I suppose that in some of them in the contemporary city, for example, the hearing of music is less delicate and there is something like a necessity for Euterpe to bang about, make loud sounds and sudden startling contrasts if she is to be heard, but I am profoundly sceptical of nationality in music. The Scotsman makes a sort of patriotism of his bagpipes, but the fact is he got that instrument by way of the Romans from ancient Egypt. People believe that the ukelélé is distinctive of Hawaii. It appeared there about sixty years ago, *en route* from Portugal, a dwarfed guitar. In Germany, I am told they discriminate between Jewish and Nordic music, but the discrimination is genealogical rather than aesthetic. It is said that the voice of a Jewish great-grandmother is audible at times in the music of Wagner and evokes strange responses in the soul of Herr Hitler. I will not discuss such twaddle.

I think it would be a very difficult task to show that music is any more a national thing, any less a world republic, than pictorial art.

Still more unquestionably cosmopolitan in its essence and reality is science ; or, rather, those two almost completely separate fields of mental activity, biology and physics, which we lump together under the name of science, differing profoundly though they do in method and objective. They are parallel fields and they are both cosmopolitan.

Biology is, as a matter of fact, much more akin in its material and methods to what we call history and social science, than it is to the physical researches with which it is associated. The main resemblance lies in the fact that, like physics, biology

is modern and universal in its range and appeal, instead of being, like ordinary traditional history, partisan and nationalist.

Both biological and physical research are frankly universal. A piece of research to-day may incorporate contributions from a worker in Japan, a worker in New York, a negro in Washington, or a Danish or a Portuguese laboratory. All honest workers are equal citizens in this noblest of republics. And when any of them meet some great leader like Rutherford or Einstein, there is no need for them to make some currish salute in recognition of the leader. And there is no need for him to plaster himself over with feathers and medals and decorations to assert himself.

There have been attempts to deny the universality of the scientific process. In Communist circles you may hear the most terrible balderdash about proletarian chemistry or proletarian mathematics, and in Russia some ignorant spy of a commissar may intrude suspiciously upon the deliberations of a scientific committee.

In Germany also it is alleged that some remarkable iniquity attaches to Jewish physics and the relativity of Einstein is denounced and banned. It seems the true Nordic Germans, whatever that word Nordic means, are so incapable of realising that space and time are not real things but merely modes of apprehension that they cannot grasp the new ideas. But in all mathematical learning, as everybody knows, there are a series of steps in the understanding of its essential symbolism, and at each step a certain number of students fall out.

The typical case in the past was the Fifth Proposition of the First Book of Euclid. That was the celebrated *Pons Asinorum*. The crowds of the rejected accumulated at the Pons and never got over it, but it never occurred to them that their inability to grasp the matter was any proof of their moral and mental superiority. Later on came fresh difficulties with the beginnings of trigonometry and conic sections and a fresh slaughter of the stupid. The propositions of Relativity are just another *Pons Asinorum* in the progress of mathematical thought, and the fact that this Nazidom, which has to cramp its intelligence to the limitations of Herr Hitler and his associates, declares itself unable to grasp this new turn of thought, marks not a difference but merely mental deficiency. The presence of a certain proportion of unteachable blockheads in a population is no more a proof of any fundamental racial or local differences in the human mind, than is the legislation against the teaching of evolution in the State of Tennessee in America. It means merely that stupidity is in power, that the school teaching has been feeble and that fools and their prejudices have got civilisation under in that particular region. It does not mean that we are in the presence of some welcome variation of human creative activities.

In the matter of the freedom of art and the two great divisions of science, therefore, we come out on the side of Cosmopolis. We hold, we are here to assert, that the free-thinking, free-speaking intelligence is of more value than any political, racial or sectarian divisions whatever. And I think that in certain directions now we might very well set ourselves to implement our activities more effectively.

There is now a considerable movement on the part of scientific workers, to consider their responsibilities to society at large. It is quite a new urgency. The British, the American, the Australian and other Associations for the advancement of Science, all in the last year or so, have created special divisions for the study and improvement of the relations of the world of research to political and social life; they have set on foot an inquiry into the modernisation of education and the wider diffusion of knowledge and I believe it would be of very great mutual advantage if we could bring our assertion of intellectual freedom into a co-operative *liaison* with this awakening of the scientific world republic to the dangers of official interference and misdirection that threaten it. Their cause is our cause.

So far I have talked only of the world republics of art, music, science. I have still to deal with our cardinal issue, the freedom of literary expression, the free play and exchange of ideas throughout the world and the relations of that cosmopolitan idea to the interferences and aggressions of governments and political authorities.

In the hopeful nineteen-twenties in which the P.E.N. Club was born, it was possible for us to declare we kept out of politics, we repudiated any political entanglements. We were —I think it was my friend Signor Marinetti who said it at Dubrovnik—above politics. Unhappily politicians and policemen have not respected these handsome repudiations of ours. They came after us. They will not let us go our way—above politics.

The freedoms of cultural life are being subjected to violent and sustained attack, and what is perhaps subtler and more grievous, a steady campaign goes on to reduce literature, education, and intellectual activity generally, to the servitude of political propaganda.

The time has come for us to deal plainly with the attack upon the dignity of the human mind, both through violence and through corruption, which is now going on.

And the only spirit in which we can meet the attack upon us is to assert boldly and aggressively the pride of original thought and creative work. There is indeed a vast amount of rubbish in the writing, painting, dramatic worlds—don't we know it—an inky riff-raff, the street-walkers of the press and library, the picture show and theatre. And there are the pretentious and there are the deliberate impostors. We have to rub shoulders with them and suffer them. They crowd the scene, they confuse the public mind.

Nevertheless, the authentic writer and artist and scientific worker are the aristocrats of the human community. There is nothing above them under heaven. They are masters. *Cher maître* is no idle compliment to them. They work on honour and under no man's direction. They are subject to an inner necessity, to do the utmost that is in them.

In times of security there is no need to hammer upon this reality. But in these times of danger and disorder, humility becomes cowardice and submission is betrayal.

This is simply a statement of fact. Take such a figure as Voltaire. He was, he is, one of the greatest princes of the world. He lives to-day as alive as when he lived in danger of a prison. I have friends who tell me they read *Candide* at least once a year and find it a living inspiration.

But try and remember Voltaire's political contemporaries. The kings of his time and the little, silly, influential politicians who ran about and started wars. Most of you, unless you are students of the period, will find great difficulty in recalling the names of many of these powerful pigmies. Their personalities have already sunk into almost complete oblivion.

We remember Catherine the Second and Frederick the Great, because they had the intelligence to correspond with Voltaire. But what ruled Geneva then and what was happening in Italy?

Take Gibbon again. Like so many of our English painters he learnt most of his art in France. His *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* has shaped and still shapes men's ideas of the process of history. Or take the starry constellations of scientific research. Take these cardinal figures in biological thought, Charles Darwin and his great spokesman, Huxley.

How do you see Charles Darwin, that gentle old man in his Kentish cottage, in relation to the politicians of his time? They made impressive figures, but the sawdust runs out of them. There was Gladstone, that resonant torrent of pompous emptiness. In my boyhood England was aflame with his Midlothian Campaign. And who cares now about his Midlothian Campaign? I would like to give the P.E.N. Club a questionnaire. What was the Midlothian Campaign about? And did it matter?

And in those days Disraeli came back to England from the Conference of Berlin. "Peace and Honour"—that was the precious gift he brought, and he made the Queen of England Empress of India. That stuff seems more than a little tawdry now. But biological science marches on from the initiatives of Darwin and Huxley with an ever-increasing reality. And what they did lives vitally in all our minds.

Or let me come nearer to our own times. Think of the comings and goings of French political life during the lifetime of Pierre Curie. There, if you like, was a prince in exile, living in poverty and neglect and nevertheless working, he and his splendid wife, with the aristocratic devotion of those who own their own minds completely and wait upon the orders of no man. These were magnificent persons.

Or again, Sigmund Freud, a cardinal figure in human thought, who has changed and illuminated men's interpretations of conduct and motive for ever. There, again, is one who made no concessions to person or prejudice in his conception and rendering of the truth. I suppose there is hardly a play or novel written nowadays in which his mighty influence is not to be traced. He has been living in England; he was very anxious to become a British citizen before he died, and he did England a very great honour by that desire.

Unhappily its realisation was postponed and frustrated by the ignorance and prejudices of various individuals in the present British Government and now it is too late.

(The rest of Mr. Wells' address will be published in our next issue.)

PADEREWSKI

THE memoirs and biographies of reproducing musicians are very often poor and unsatisfactory documents. They are generally undertaken by superficial admirers who have been drawn to these musicians more by their public successes than by their intrinsic qualities. Consequently what such admirers write is either mere unenlightened journalism or fatuous adulation—the recording of triumphs and successes with the aid of extracts from newspaper eulogies embellished with the names of those distinguished in other fields of life who have expressed their admiration of the great man in question. A few musicians have been good writers. Chopin's letters are witty and intelligent; Schumann was a sound rather than an exciting writer; Berlioz and Wagner were both brilliant, the former being almost a great wit. These, however, were all composers and it is easier far to write of works than of performances. To write the life of a musician who is primarily a performer and not a composer is an extremely difficult task and I do not know of any more successful attempt than the *Paderewski Memoirs** just published.

Miss Lawton, who was once an actress, had the excellent idea of inducing Paderewski to relate his memoirs to her, leaving her to transcribe them from her verbatim notes. The method had its dangers. It was her business to incite Paderewski to talk, but there was a grave risk that this talk might turn out to be so discursive and haphazard that the contents of the book might be quite formless and impossible to read. That this has been avoided is due very largely to Paderewski himself who kept clearly in his own mind a necessary chronological order and himself checked the natural tendency to digression. For example, on page 55 Paderewski says that in his youth he suffered from two drawbacks: (1) he could not pronounce "s" very well and emitted a sort of whistle, and (2) that he used to make frightful grimaces at difficult passages when playing. He then continues:

> The first thing, the bad articulation, I practically got rid of. I studied that, not exactly like Demosthenes by keeping small pebbles in my mouth but I practised with other means. I have always tried to overcome things from my early youth. But these grimaces were not so easily got rid of. It was not until I met Richard Strauss many years later that I profited by his example, for his grimaces were worse than mine. That is an exceedingly interesting story which I shall give you in another conversation. No, I shan't forget.

Paderewski did not forget and he tells Miss Lawton the story much later, the reader will find it on page 78 of this book. Such an example makes it clear that these "memoirs" are not a formless outpouring of miscellaneous memories. As is almost invariably the case with biographies and autobiographies the earlier years of Paderewski's life and career provide the most interesting material; but the contrast between the two halves of the present book, that is to say, between the period prior to his first great success in Paris in 1888 and in Vienna in 1889 (when he was 28 to 29 years old) and the period of his subsequent world-wide fame is not as marked as usual.

Paderewski was a rather rare case as a virtuoso for he made his serious public appearance much later than is usual. As he himself says:

> It took me half my life to realise that there are two ways of playing the piano. The one is to play, the other is to *work!* If you use the one you will never achieve anything. You are carried away with your own emotion and with the emotion of the content of the work you are playing. And you might spend the whole of your life playing without learning anything. You can become drunk in any art on your own emotion—a great many people are wasting their time in that way—arriving at no results at all. While working, of course, you must suffer, you have absolutely no pleasure, only the effort and pain. You see all this time I was playing not working. I only began really working ten years later and still to this moment I have to fight that inclination to play, because it is so tedious to work.

The above words deserve to be remembered by every young artist. Above all, by English musicians because here the tradition of the "amateur" still survives. There is a place for the musical amateur but that place is not the public concert-hall or opera house.

At the Warsaw Conservatoire and elsewhere Paderewski failed to find teachers who could show him what he was seeking—*how to work!* It was not until he went to Leschetizky at the age of twenty-four that he found what he was seeking, a teacher who could teach him how to work. And Leschetizky told him that it was "too late"! He had to start at the beginning again, at finger-exercises! If Paderewski had not been a man of invincible determination and endowed with enormous vitality it would have been too late, but by dint of truly terrific work he became a virtuoso.

It is a curious fact that Paderewski was a failure in Berlin after his first great successes in Paris, London and Vienna. As a Pole he did not find the Germans very sympathetic and a description of Berlin by him is worth quoting:

> In appearance Berlin was rather theatrical. It was all very military. Uniforms were to be seen everywhere. There was even then a certain antagonism between the officers in uniform and the civilians in plain clothes and one could see always the people stepping humbly aside, even off the side-walk, to make room for the officers. Marked superiority. It was ridiculous. But the good German people were already accustomed to it. They had got into the habit of acknowledging their inferiority.

Like every artist of real distinction Paderewski is a man of character and his individuality appears clearly in these pages. The attractive nature of the man is shown in the following delightful story. He is speaking of his two rooms where for a long time he worked in Vienna:

> Another souvenir of those cherished rooms was a spider. I have not yet told you the story of the spider—my spider. That is such a charming story of my youth. The day I was practising in my little room in Vienna. Among the pieces I was then studying . . . was a certain study by Chopin, a study in thirds. I was just starting to work. I lit the candles and sat down at the piano. The room was very dark, you know, there were so many tall shrubs growing close to the window. Then suddenly in the midst of my playing, there came down from the ceiling right on to the piano desk something like a tiny silver thread. It attracted my attention and I looked a little closer, and then I saw—a spider attached to it. He hung there motionless and appeared to be listening to my playing and as long as I played that particular study in *thirds*, the little spider remained there perfectly still on his line.
>
> And now comes the interesting thing. After finishing the study in thirds I went to another study—in sixths this time and the moment I began it, the spider turned himself quickly about and hurried up to the ceiling. Well, it struck me at the moment as very funny and I was interested and deeply intrigued. I said to myself. "Now I must see whether the spider is really musical or not—whether he meant to come down to listen on purpose or by accident. So I suddenly stopped my study in *sixths* and quickly started again the one in *thirds*. Instantly down came the little spider. . . .

I shall not retail the end of the story but let the reader enjoy it for himself. All through the book we get glimpses of Paderewski, the Polish patriot who was subsequently to become the first President of the Polish Republic. But the story of those later years is not contained in the present volume which ends with the war of 1914–18. W. J. TURNER

* *The Paderewski Memoirs*, by Paderewski and Mary Lawton (Collins, 21s.).

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Stanley and Livingstone," at the Gaumont
"Only Angels Have Wings," at the Regal
"Blackmail," at the Empire

Stanley and Livingstone is a remarkable film, first because it gives Spencer Tracy as Stanley the opportunity to qualify once more for the Academy Award by his painless rendering of that international wisecrack, "Doctor Livingstone—I presume," and secondly for its very unsympathetic representation of Doctor Livingstone. As Doctor Livingstone Sir Cedric Hardwicke enlists our deepest sympathies for the "saved" natives of Ujiji. Wearing a grotesque costume, and with the most unctuous sporting parson manner, he extracts thorns from natives' feet and conducts a syncopated rendering of *Onward Christian Soldiers* with full choral effects. Happily the Livingstone episodes are comparatively brief. The film is mainly concerned with Stanley, sent by his New York newspaper to find Livingstone reported dead, but conceivably alive, in unexplored Africa. The story of his journey into Tanganyika gives the opportunity for some magnificent, if familiar, shots of wild animals and the African country. After the discovery of Livingstone the film takes us back to England, where Stanley's story and Livingstone's maps which he has brought back are generally regarded as a hoax. In the climax he is opportunely able to prove his statements before the Royal Geographical Society.

Only Angels Have Wings is not, as one might suppose, a war picture; in fact it is by far the best antidote to war in the present crop of new films. The story follows well-trodden paths—flying men who must get through with the mails no matter what the weather, a rich man's son to be rescued under impossible conditions, strained nerves and tough *bonhomie*. Everyone has a heart of gold, the coward makes good, and boy gets girl. It sounds terrible. Actually, directed by Howard Hawks, who could make a five-shilling pleasure-flight look like an epic, slickly acted by Cary Grant, Jean Arthur and Richard Barthelmess, with amusing dialogue, and South America as a background, it is a thoroughly enjoyable film. It is photographed in sepia, and the flying sequences, taken, one suspects, in Colorado, are amongst the loveliest and most exciting that have been made.

In *Blackmail* Edward G. Robinson has a wife, a repulsive child, a nice business blowing out oil-well fires with nitro-glycerine and a past—he has escaped from a chain-gang. He makes so much money putting out fires that he is able to buy a well of his own, just in time to have it blackmailed off him by an old friend from the past, who then promptly exposes him to the police. Back on the chain-gang, where conditions are highly unpleasant, he dreams of home, family, and revenge. He escapes once more, reaches his home-town after an exciting sequence, sets fire to the well, and proceeds to roast the blackmailer over it. This puts the blackmailer, one might say, on the spit, and he quickly confesses to the crime for which Mr. Robinson is doing time. Mr. Robinson then blows the fire out. Mr. Robinson is undoubtedly preferable in a suaver mood, and the shots of the blazing oil wells provide the best moments of the film. This is a picture primarily for pyromaniacs.

THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, October 21st—
Fabian Society Lecture, Harold J. Laski: "Changes in the Party System," Conway Hall, 2.15.
"Madam Butterfly," Sadler's Wells, 2.
Courtauld Sargent Concert, Queens Hall, 2.30.
MONDAY, October 23rd—
National Gallery Concerts, Mon.–Fri. at 1, Tues. and Fri. at 4.30.
WEDNESDAY, October 25th—
Everyman's Concert, The Grinke Trio and John McKenna, Rudolf Steiner Hall, 3.

Correspondence

UNCOMMON SENSE ABOUT THE WAR

SIR,—I must congratulate you on your very timely assertion of the fact that if we go into conference with Germany and Russia, or with any of the Powers, without a positive programme which we mean to see through, Germany and Russia will wipe the floor with us. We had better stay out and fight for our old school ties. And this, I am afraid, implies that we must keep Mr. Chamberlain out of the Conference at all costs. He has his virtues; and it would be a pity to turn him down; but he is no match in political argument with the Russian and German diplomatists. His last performance is conclusive. Germany having just conquered Poland Mr. Chamberlain demands that any conference must proceed on the assumption that Poland has just conquered Germany. And for the rest he leaves "the choice": that is, the initiative, to Herr Hitler. What are you to do with a statesman who goes on like that? We should be safer with Sir John Simon, who would at least understand that the business of an advocate is not to indulge his own feelings but to capture the jury, which in this case means all Europe, most of Asia, and the United States of America.

But any front bench politicians would be dangerous; and back benchers would be ridiculous. What we need is a War Council of scientifically minded persons possessing the necessary mental qualifications and no parliamentary habits or ambitions, with a staff of expert pleaders well briefed and instructed, and gifted enough to be effective on the platform and in the broadcasting studio. Let the ignorant public have its favourite brands of blether and bunk from the parliamentary celebrities by all means; but such stuff cuts no ice in conferences of nations with guns in their pockets.

Turning to your correspondence columns I must not ignore Mr. Desmond MacCarthy. He thinks my definition of the Russian policy of the Old School Ties as the restoration of the Romanoffs and the Tsardom silly. What is his alternative? The Bourbon monarchy collapsed in 1789; and died so thoroughly that Napoleon, who made dukes and kings of his marshals, confessed that he could not revive the marquises. Yet when we and the Prussians finally smashed Napoleon twenty-six years later, our victorious O.S.Ts restored the Bourbons as if the French Revolution had never happened. It is only twenty-two years since the Russian monarchy collapsed. What other object than a similar restoration does Mr. MacCarthy suppose our O.S.Ts have in view? Besides, it is bad business to call me silly. If any man calls me silly, however justly, people laugh at him. If I call him silly, however unjustly, people think there must be something in it because Shaw says so. It is not fair, and should be kept out of controversy in public.

It is quite true that we have no guarantee that any agreements a Conference can arrive at will be kept by the parties. Herr Hitler may tear them up the day after. So may we. The Germans must take their chance of that. Herr Hitler does not mind taking chances. The chances he took up to Munich were negligible; but he took a serious chance when he marched into Prague, and a thunderingly big one when he made for Warsaw. What chance have we against him if we are afraid to take chances or to fight without a guarantee of victory? The Poles had the best guarantee of victory in the world, the support of the British Empire. Result: another Partition of Poland. After that what sane diplomatist is going to twaddle about guarantees? If there is a Conference its first rule of order had better be that any Frenchman who mentions Security or any Englishman who mentions guarantees shall be booted out the room.

The climax of Desmond's inventiveness about me is reached when he says that the axis of my political judgments is that Stalin is incapable of sin. I really cannot go quite so far as that. I do not consider even Mr. Chamberlain incapable of sin. The utmost I can do in that direction is to say to the plenipotentiaries at the Conference (if there is to be a Conference) "He that is without sin among you let him cast the first stone at Stalin."

I must not be understood as proposing that we should go into conference as Pacifists and surrender at discretion. I agree entirely with THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION that we should go in with quite as big a bundle of demands as Herr Hitler or Stalin or anyone else, and that though there must be a general Cease Fire during the Conference (for the plenipotentiaries cannot very well confer in gasmasks) we must keep our powder dry, as I advised Stalin to do on the only occasion on which I had the privilege of meeting him. If we cannot agree, we must, I suppose, fight it out, in which case my position will be simplified; for if a situation is produced in which I must kill a German or the German will kill me the only question left is which of us is the quicker on the draw.

But as I am a born coward, and dislike extremely all this blackout business and ruinous taxation and the rest of it, I shall still want to know what I am fighting for. Mr. Chamberlain has cleared up that question to a certain point. He declares that we are not out for territorial conquest or material acquisitions of any sort. This means that the war is a purely ideological one. That

is, we will not cease from military fight, nor shall our sword sleep in our hand, until we have forcibly smashed National Socialism in Germany and Communism in Russia, and replaced both by the British Constitution, under which we are producing wage workers who have had only one day's employment in nine years, and authentic histories like Miss Ellen Wilkinson's *The Town That Was Murdered*, which should have as a sub-title *Das Kapital* Up To Date.

Now call me a Defeatist or anything else you like; but for the life of me I cannot consider this result probable. It is not solely that as an old Marxist I regard it as out of the line of historical development. I do not preach that you cannot put the clock back: nothing is easier: our Houses of Parliament hardly do anything else. But as ideas have no regard for frontiers an ideological war is apt to produce civil war: that is, revolution. Even without such complications ideological wars last thirty years, not three. And even with Mr. Maynard Keynes in his most jocular mood (which delights me) demonstrating that the more we spend on war the richer we shall all be, thirty years war will cost a lot of money. Already our Labour Party, though much more war-crazy and fuller of pugnacious pep than the War Cabinet, is clamouring for a confiscation of capital. I am a capitalist and an economist; and I don't like it.

Herr Hitler does not want to face it. Stalin does not want to face it. Our Old School Ties want to face it only because their old schools have left them with the social outlook of Jane Austen and Anthony Trollope, and the military outlook of Edward the Third. Let me warn them that they are no longer an educated and disciplined aristocracy facing a rabble of uneducated and undisciplined blackguards. The Nazi old school tie and the red Russian one carry with them an education and a discipline of which Eton and Harrow, Winchester and Rugby have no conception, because you cannot educate Englishmen: I have been trying to do it all my life; and I know. Then why put ourselves in the wrong, and Herr Hitler in the right, by refusing to get together and see whether this permanent ideological Trotskyan war is really unavoidable? If it is, we can fight as easily after a conference as before it.

I am too old to have any conscience in this or any other matter; but I still hate to see people making fools of themselves.

G. BERNARD SHAW

THE RIGHT REPLY TO HITLER

SIR,—You ask the Prime Minister to make his peace terms precise. But I notice that you yourself are as chary as he is to do so in practice; perhaps wisely.

To a *jusqu'à-boutist* who is determined to achieve the ideal peace at whatever sacrifice, or to a defeatist who is prepared to accept forthwith Hitler's *fait accompli* in Central Europe, there is no insuperable difficulty in being precise. But I infer that you yourself belong to neither of these extremes, but are prepared for a compromise peace on terms that are reasonably satisfactory. If so, I suggest that for the Government to state rigid terms now would be both unrealistic and a possible obstacle to peace hereafter; though this does not preclude useful discussion by less responsible people. For a compromise peace must depend on circumstances which we cannot anticipate, the future concealing too many unknowns.

For myself, I am not yet ready to rule out the ideal peace. It may fall within our grasp in ways we cannot yet foresee. More unlikely things have happened before now. If, on the other hand, events prove that it is beyond our attainment, it is utterly impossible to say now what sort of compromise will be wise and feasible.

King's College, Cambridge. J. M. KEYNES

SIR,—I have read each of the leaders in the last two numbers of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION twice—I could find neither the swings nor the roundabouts. There is a certain incoherence in our Left-wing black-outs. All that is clear to the reader is: war was desirable until it occurred and peace is desirable since war has arrived. ELIZABETH BIBESCO

44 Bedford Square,
W.C.1.

[Princess Antoine Bibesco should talk sense, even in wartime.—ED., *N. S. & N.*]

SIR,—In your leading article entitled "The Right Reply to Hitler" you say: "We have talked about internationalising our colonial system; we should ask for nothing better than to share the responsibility of administering our Colonies with any State that will help in developing them for the common good."

May I suggest that your endorsement of a liberal theory of administration has enticed you, quite unconsciously, I am sure, into an illiberal attitude toward British populations overseas? The conception of the internationalisation of our Colonies ignores the fundamental fact that there can be no moral justification for a compulsory exclusion from the Empire of millions of men, white, brown and black, who have been born and bred under the Union Jack, who believe the British system (whatever its shortcomings) to be the best yet evolved, and who have built their homes and bred their families in colonial territories for which they feel an ineradicable affection and an inalienable loyalty.

British communities overseas have been encouraged to believe that they will in due time attain self-government. If the principle you now advance had been put into operation some decades ago, it would have frustrated the development of the great self-governing Dominions as distinctively British States, and you will doubtless agree that the world and Great Britain would have been immeasurably the poorer as a result.

To come to more recent times and to deal merely with Africa, Southern Rhodesia, which was granted self-government only a decade and a half ago, would have been denied that privilege and responsibility, one which she has discharged splendidly, and a new and insuperable obstacle would have been placed in the way of that union of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika on the one hand, and of the two Rhodesias and Nyasaland on the other, which are inevitable if only on account of their economic interdependence, and are desirable on many grounds, not least that of Native welfare.

Because we have brought British protection to African populations, and particularly because our policy of trusteeship has so signally benefited those populations, we have no right unilaterally to decide abruptly to shatter that relationship. To enforce upon Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika Territory, for instance, some form of internationalised administration would in principle be as reprehensible as to subject Devon and Cornwall to a similar experiment. Only by constantly recalling that the Colonies are the homes of millions of loyal British subjects, not vacant lands at the disposal of experimenters in Great Britain, can the vital objection to suggestions of internationalisation be brought home to ourselves and others.

Internationalisation is a loose term, which might, of course, mean many different things, but the advocates of drastic change have not yet agreed on a definition which would permit the practical objections to be listed seriatim by those who hold opposing opinions. Continued failure to define the term has, on the other hand, afforded the theorists the opportunity of escaping a good deal of criticism under the cover of their nebulosity and the camouflage of their benevolent intentions.

A most significant fact is that, so far as I am aware, not one single man of outstanding colonial experience and renown—whether as administrator, missionary, educationist, agriculturist, or trader—has embraced this notion of colonial internationalisation. Yet among such men are many of pronouncedly liberal views—so much so that more than a few of them have been regarded by their fellows overseas as out-and-out Negrophiles. If such people cannot be convinced of the practicability and moral justification of internationalisation, the case must obviously be a weak one. That it is sincerely advocated I do not doubt, but let it be clearly understood that support comes solely, or almost solely, from people whose combined first-hand colonial experience is negligible. F. S. JOELSON,

91 Gt. Titchfield Street, W.1. Editor, *East Africa and Rhodesia*

SIR,—Is the rejection of Hitler's suggested peace by the British Government to be followed by a statement to an anxious and listening world of the terms on which the British Government would be prepared to negotiate a peace? The Prime Minister's declaration accords with the almost universal opinion of the country that the arrogant conqueror's terms proposed could never make an enduring peace.

But is it sufficient that he should demand better proposals from Hitler or even require deeds as well as words as proof that "aggression will cease and pledges be kept?" Would it be really any guarantee if Hitler were to march his troops out of

Poland and Prague as Sir Archibald Sinclair suggests? Would we then with a sigh of relief declare that Germany's promise was to be relied on that it would not deal with Denmark, Holland, Switzerland and other neighbours as it has dealt in turn with Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland. Would that give us the smallest guarantee of peace in our time?

Hitler is incapable of proposing terms, now or hereafter which will give the world the security it needs. Therefore the negative answer of our Government, while it is correct, is not what the world requires from it.

What is the peace which Britain wants? The Prime Minister says: "We are looking beyond victory to the laying of a foundation of a better international system which will mean that war is not to be the inevitable lot of every succeeding generation." What does he mean? How would he attain it?

The preliminary questions in any settlement concern the peoples who have been overrun and enslaved by Hitler. What is to happen to the Poles, the Czechs, the Austrians? The issue so far is carefully avoided. All we are told is that "there is identity of view with the Polish Government." Does that mean or doesn't it mean the re-creation of Poland as it was before the invasion? It is necessary to be realistic about a new situation. For it would not be a hopeful beginning to a negotiation to propose again to subjugate the Ukrainians to the Poles. Concrete proposals ought to be made by us to secure the liberation of the Poles and the Czechs and the independence of the Austrians. The first question, therefore, concerns the kind of settlement which should be obtained in Europe for the oppressed and conquered races.

But that is, as we all see, the least part of the problem. We want security for the future. We want to know that Switzerland, Holland, Belgium, Denmark, and ourselves in France and Britain are not to be invaded or terrorised by Fascism for the next generation. The guarantees against it cannot come from Hitler. They must come from a world combined to frustrate any and every aggression. Are we ever again going to be content with leaving the right to make war to the sovereign decision of national governments? Or are we going to propose a re-vitalised League of Nations or a Federation of Europe which will use international power to restrain an aggressor? If we are to go on fighting for a new world, we have the right to know what the shape of that new world is to be.

I have already expressed my view that the acid test of policy is whether it would imply world disarmament by ourselves and everyone else. Are we to go on fighting for that? Or is it to be left uncertain whether it is only the vanquished who shall be disarmed, after the pattern of the Versailles peace? The neutral nations, great and small, will indeed to be anxious to help us towards peace if we are fighting with the express purpose of creating a disarmed world hereafter.

One of Hitler's demands is for the restoration of colonies. It is only one facet of the vast questions in which Great Britain is involved chief among nations. We cannot avoid at the end of this war, whether we like it or not, taking a leading part in a new colonial policy for the world. It would be far better now if a British government made clear how far it was prepared to guarantee the economic development of colonies in the interests of all, and how far it was prepared to give self-government in Africa and India.

Fascist ideology makes it impossible for conditions of an enduring peace to be proposed by Germany. Nothing except British indolence of mind or British imperialist interests prevent a British Government from doing so. Neither of these are good enough reasons for plunging on into the abyss of a long war without putting forward such terms as would satisfy the millions who are asking "what is the war continuing for now?"

Wallington, CHARLES TREVELYAN
Cambo, Morpeth.

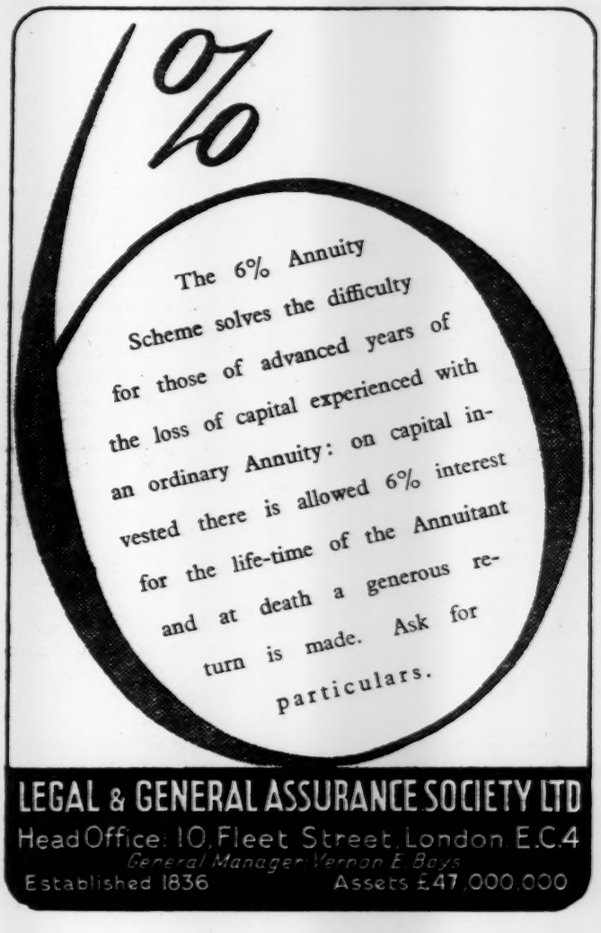
SIR,—We are at war, I take it, to put an end to aggression in Europe. But, apparently, Hitler has been superseded as aggressor-in-chief by Stalin. He has, thanks to Stalin, at last come to the end of his territorial conquests—at any rate in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. Hitler is in the position of a burglar (but let us be gentlemanly and say an adventurer) who has been double-crossed by another and stronger burglar (and/or adventurer). Part of his prospective booty has been taken from him by Stalin, who is now helping himself without let or hindrance. We do not even declare war on Stalin, but proceed with our measures to check the check-mated aggressor. Hitler seems now in the position which, without Stalin's interference, we could have forced him to only after a longish war. Probably he would be embarassed if we took him at his word and nailed him down to a world conference, where for the first time in his career he would find himself confronted by great strength—moral and (more persuasive) physical. NEVILLE CARDUS

National Liberal Club, S.W.1.

SIR,—The weak points in your Right Reply to Hitler, are the following: (1) Saner Economic Relations with our Neighbours. Unfortunately tariffs, duties and other restrictions on trade are not imposed merely out of spite or for pure devilment, they are imposed so as to preserve the reduced purchasing power of one's own people for one's own manufactures. Each nation tries to keep the diminishing markets of its own people for its own industries by means of import duties, and also to invade the markets of its neighbours, which they resist by the imposition of similar duties, and *vice versa*. The only remedy is to increase the internal markets of all nations by raising the purchasing powers of their peoples until they are more nearly equal to productive capacity. This means more pay for the majority of people, who need and will buy the goods, and less profits for the minority who merely save in order to invest their surplus incomes. Will Chamberlain and the Tories agree to this? (2) Sharing the Colonies, and the Freedom of India. Colonies are required by capitalist nations as additional markets for their products, as fields for investment of their surplus savings, and as sources of cheap raw materials by means of the exploitation of their cheap colonial labour. In spite of Norman Angell and his Great Illusion, no capitalist country will give up these advantages except as the result of brute force. The Freedom of India is likewise impossible for the same reasons.

These Right Replies to Hitler are impossible except from a Socialist Government in Britain. Unfortunately, on our present prospects, a Socialist Government in Britain would appear to be unlikely except as the result of defeat, or near defeat in war, and prolonged suffering for our people. WRAM

[Too true. But the fact that we cannot get the right reply from the present Government does not make it other than right.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]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SIR,—Were loyalties decided by a profit and loss account or by terms of some reciprocal Social Contract, I suppose mine would be primarily to the United States. I have, however, an irrational attachment to this country of my birth. From that type of attachment springs the pugnacity that Mr. Shaw deplores. I find myself providing that attachment with a reason by saying that this country has contributed something in liberty and experiment to human civilisation. That tradition, indeed, is shared by the whole Anglo-Saxon world and has qualities in common with the characteristic cultures and values accepted in Western Europe. That tradition and those values I wish to see preserved. How is it to be done?

For myself I deplore that this country ever interested itself in the affairs of Eastern and Central Europe. Nothing that I have seen of the writing of military correspondents leads me to suppose that this policy was strategically necessary. We should have stayed entrenched behind our Maginot line. Since we did not, Stalin indeed has won a great victory. The (unintended) assets of this policy may be that it has wrecked all future prospects for capitalism, whose doom it has sealed. Unhappily the end of capitalism is not necessarily the end of tyranny or the establishment of human decencies.

The task of building up an Anglo-Saxon-Western bloc, competent to preserve its own distinctive values, was not undertaken. Pious persons on both sides of the Atlantic merely exhorted us to live up to our moral obligations. The logical consequence of this piety would seem to be a suicidal declaration of war on Russia as the partner in aggression against Poland. Energy that should have been spent upon the consolidation of power was spent in rhetoric about the indefeasible sovereignty of small states.

I believe that "peace is founded upon freedom." I believe in the free spirit of small nations, Scotland, Wales, Slovakia, Poland, the Ukraine, Burma. But I totally disbelieve that the map of future civilisation can be constructed on the supposition of the right to sovereignty of small states. We should aim at the reconstruction of the League on the basis of the federal union of peoples, and at the ending of the full sovereignty alike of Germany and of Poland, of France and of Czechoslovakia. That of England was lost long ago. It is the Englishman's privilege to be ruled by Scotsmen. I believe in advocating this federal scheme as a universal prescription. I believe in applying it now in those areas within which we have some control.

Our Western civilisation will not be preserved by the policy of binding it up with the array of the "haves" against the "have nots." Heaven forbid. Or, since of Heaven we may suppose the Almighty telling the Archbishops, "Grace, include me out of it"—Stalin forbid. That policy means to invite all the dispossessed of every race and class to unite for our overthrow in the name of justice. It will not be provided by binding the cause of Western civilisation up with the demolition of Germany in the name of the Balance of Power, unless the task is to be re-undertaken every thirty years. The facts of population will not bow to the conveniences of politics and of our wishful thinking. Mr. Duff Cooper apparently advances no further than to prescribe disarmament for one nation only. Western civilisation will not be preserved by a war in which the West is left bled white and exhausted; incapable, even if victorious, of enforcing a peace; and hence compelled to accept a peace dictated by an unexhausted Russia, as prelude to a nemesis of Fascist rule at home.

The actual future of the world is one of blocs. Western values, free, federal and vital, may only be preserved by the still not impossible task of balancing Germany against Russia (as Hitler himself ingenuously suggested; but we were too big fools to act on his suggestion) and of consolidating our own power for peace. The greatest power bloc in the world is ours for the making. If that bloc is used to advocate—alike to Germany and Russia—return to a League reconstructed as a federal union, that bloc is on the side of moral leadership. With a Hitler who accepts that, we can negotiate as non-Hitlerian. The time is coming when, if Germany did not exist, we should have to make her, even were it by restoring Habsburg . . . or Hohenzollern. If Russia can find the present German society agreeable, we must not be more squeamish or "less progressive." The alternatives are: (*a*) the improbable, if desirable, one of a defeat of Germany so speedy and decisive that Britain and France are able to compel Russia to disinterest herself, even with a Germany in revolution; or (*b*) first, Nazi-Bolshevik dictation, chiefly Bolshevik . . . and, then, Fascist uprising of the middle class and the long evening of Caesarism. To carry through our task of peace, strength and reform, we, unlike Russia (unless her strength has been grossly lied about), need peace now if we can get it without loss of actual strength. We, too, need a revolutionary change of policy and the conference table, unless we would obligingly serve the cause of those who have least love for us. Presumably the weakness of Germany and its need for peace, as well as the personal weakness of Herr Hitler, will be adequately known, on both sides of the table, to those who meet. The time has come for realism, not empty quixotics.

GEORGE CATLIN

[Does Professor Catlin think that Hitler could become a member of a Federal League?—Ed., *N.S. & N.*]

STALINISM

SIR,—It is, I think, desirable that the country and in particular the Left Wing "Intelligentsia" should realise exactly Russia's responsibility for this terrible tragedy which has overtaken Europe.

When the Soviet Government held conversations with Britain and France either (*a*) she held the view that Polish integrity should be preserved, or (*b*) she took the view that Poland should be partitioned amongst her neighbours. If (*a*) it is impossible to justify her sudden reversal of policy shown by the German Pact. If (*b*) her conduct in negotiating for months in support of Poland was indefensible treachery. Whichever way one takes it, therefore Russia is unmasked as untrustworthy. Those who called out for a Pact with her so violently now know the reason why it was not signed, either because we refused to agree to a division of Poland or because Russia never would have concluded a Pact for the integrity of Poland. Mr. McGovern, M.P., rightly pointed out in the House of Commons that by signing the first German Pact, Russia became responsible for this war which Hitler never could have undertaken without that Pact. A public repudiation of Russia by you, Sir, is especially called for.

TRUTH,

[What our correspondent means by a public repudiation of Russia we do not know. We have already stated that Russia's *volte face* precipitated the war and described it as an act of double-crossing. Does our correspondent complain that, in company with Mr. Winston Churchill, we strongly pressed for the Anglo-Soviet alliance and that we have blamed the British Government for not obtaining that alliance when it could have done so? Even now good relations with Russia are essential for our security, if they can be obtained, and we welcomed the Government's recognition of that fact in the limited trade agreement made last week.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

SIR,—Those of us who think that truthfulness is a necessary condition of lasting social progress are sufficiently familiar with the tactic which has lately chosen Harry Pollitt as what our American friends call its *fall guy*. So perhaps my friend Miss Margaret Gardiner exaggerates the *naïveté* of readers of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION when she chooses to quibble about what members of her committee turned up to *assent* to the policy referred to in my letter, or who was chosen to propose it. Her reference to the files of the *Daily Worker* is irrelevant, because I expressed no opinion about whether it was advocating such a policy "at that time." It would be strange if the somersaults of all the flying young men of the Popular Front trapeze always synchronised. Their effect on ordinary people who expect and respect a modicum of consistency is sufficiently illustrated by the letter of Mr. Keynes.

LANCELOT HOGBEN

Torphins.

LIBRARIES

SIR,—In Professor Haldane's article in your issue of October 14th, he says with reference to the University of London, "Libraries are closed," giving the impression that the libraries of all the scientific schools attached to the University have been closed.

I should like to point out for the benefit of your readers that this is not the case. The Library of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, as announced in the *British Medical Journal* and the *Lancet* of October 7th, is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturdays, 10 a.m. to noon. All scientific research workers are offered as full a service as possible, while we shall be pleased to answer any inquiries by post or telephone.

CYRIL C. BARNARD,
Librarian.

London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine,
Keppel Street, W.C.1.

IN THE WAR

SIR,—My letter was written on September 20th and printed on October 7th. In a private letter you alluded to "the technique of electoral controversy," and in my answer to it I said that I did not grasp the allusion: if this had been printed your pseudonymous

CHILDREN — under WAR

A Manifesto

THERE are some four thousand children whose only home is the NATIONAL CHILDREN'S HOME AND ORPHANAGE. That is a great responsibility at any time, but is especially so just now.

Branches of the Home in the danger zones have been temporarily closed, and hundreds of children transferred to places of less peril. Extensive precautionary measures have been necessary in the now crowded Branches which are occupied. Lighting restriction and the general dislocation are disturbing many normal sources of income at a time of rising costs.

The last war nearly doubled the numbers in the NATIONAL CHILDREN'S HOME, and whatever the strain which may come upon it now, it desires to do its part.

During seventy years of service to children in distress the NATIONAL CHILDREN'S HOME has helped to good citizenship some twenty-six thousand. Now, more than ever, its children are needed to help to build a happier England, and to serve the cause of righteousness and peace in the days to come.

We need the help of men and women of goodwill everywhere who will do all they can to see that the children shall not suffer. We appeal for your special aid in a time of urgent necessity.

Rev. Richard Pyke (*President*) — The Viscountess Astor, C.H., LL.D., M.P. (*Vice-President*)

Sir Thomas Barlow BT., K.C.V.O., M.D., F.R.S. (*Treasurer*) — Rt. Hon. Sir Kingsley Wood, P.C., M.P. (*Vice-President*)

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correspondent would not have written his letter, since he would either have possessed the information it asked for, i.e., that I was not concerned with a potential electoral rival, or else he would have believed that I was a person of whom it was useless to ask information. I certainly had no trace of any notion that you were an electoral rival when I wrote my letter: and if I had had any such notion, I should, quite apart from any question of taste, have unhesitatingly stuck to the rule of thumb that it is always a mistake to say anything which can be even misrepresented as a personal attack upon your rival. I have just been officially informed that, so far as your party secretary here knows, your candidature had not been published. KENNETH PICKTHORN

Corpus Christi College,
Cambridge.

[Mr. Martin's candidature has not been subject of any official announcement, but it has been generally known and discussed in the press. It had certainly not occurred to us that it was unknown to Mr. Pickthorn. If we had realised this we should certainly not have printed the letter by Diogenes and we are glad to know that whatever Mr. Pickthorn's motive in starting this correspondence it had nothing to do with Party politics.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

CITIZENS' ADVICE

SIR,—Our attention has been drawn to the paragraph in "Critic's" notes in your issue of September 30th regarding the need by the average citizen for what he so aptly terms "a little help about his own private affairs." It was precisely to endeavour to assist men and women with the solution of all sorts of personal and family problems, which it was foreseen were likely to arise in the event of war, that the National Council of Social Service, with the support and collaboration of many voluntary bodies all over the country, planned and has now established the Citizens' Advice Bureau service.

To date (October 10th) 536 Bureaux have been set up all over the country—and the number continues to grow. At any of these bureaux members of the public can obtain helpful advice on the many problems which beset them. In effect, the bureaux act as clearing houses for enquiries and where an immediate answer or assistance cannot be given, the applicant is put into touch with the appropriate authority or organisation which can help him. The bureaux are staffed by people who have had long experience in this type of work, assisted in very many cases by volunteers with some special knowledge.

By means of a service of Advice Notes concerning new legislation and regulations, prepared by qualified officers of the National Council, the staffs of the bureaux are able to explain in simple terms the complexities of the many new enactments and orders which have flowed in an almost endless stream from the Government.

In the reverse direction, the bureaux keep the National Council informed of any questions that are difficult to answer or problems that appear to have no immediate solution, and these are brought to the attention of the appropriate authorities.

The need for assisting members of the public on personal legal problems has also been realised and, wherever possible, the collaboration of the Poor Man's Lawyer service is being obtained, while in many cases practising solicitors are voluntarily lending their aid without fee.

"Critic" mentions the possibility of the B.B.C. lending a hand. His plea has already been answered, for arrangements have been completed whereby the B.B.C. devotes a quarter of an hour every fortnight on Saturday evening to answering the types of questions on which the returns from the bureaux indicate that fuller information and explanation to the public is needed. The material for these broadcasts is prepared by the N.C.S.S. and the broadcasts are delivered in such a way by popular speakers that there should be no difficulty on the part of the man in the street to understand them. These broadcasts began last Saturday and will continue on every other Saturday for some time to come.

L. SHOETEN SACK, Secretary
The National Council of Social Service,
26, Bedford Square, London, W.C.1.

SHEEP AND GAS MASKS

SIR,—A pleasing method of relieving one's feelings about the war is suggested by the action of two young evacuees near here. As the farmer approached they fitted their gas masks on a couple of his sheep and ran away. LAND GIRL

Urgent appeal to every reader

Every newspaper is having to reckon with the possibility of a paper shortage.

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Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

GIDE has never been a popular writer. Unlike Barrès and Wells, he has been the voice of no faith to which groups could rally. Yet his influence on individuals not only in France but in Germany, the smaller countries and both the Americas has been incalculable. In England he is still a neglected author. A few of his books have been admirably translated by Dorothy Bussy, and he has made his mark upon a few writers now in their forties—Aldous Huxley, for instance, who has, however, been more ready to learn from him than to praise him. I count my first happening, during the last war, upon *Les Nourritures Terrestres* as a crucial experience: it is discreditable that so potent a book has not yet been published in England; and, ever since, I have read and reread Gide with continuous interest. He seems to me the most distinguished writer alive. His genius is nourished by a fervour alike of the brain and of the senses: a scientifically trained intellect serves his devotion to truth, while an elastic, pellucid and melodious style reflects every tremor of his sensibility. He is a poet, a humourist and a logician. But he has always refused to be rhetorical or explicit, requiring the reader to meet him at least half way. He belongs, in fact, to the clan not of Voltaire or Hugo, but of Racine and Stendhal. He does not want his tower to be of ivory, he tells us—rather is it of glass, a vulnerable observatory. Outside of it, he adds, he is worth nothing; but there have been bold sorties. In *Corydon* he tried to popularise his opinion that homosexuality was not necessarily either unnatural or antisocial; then he became a Communist, proclaimed his faith, went to Russia, and proclaimed his disillusionment. (This was the more courageous, because his Communism had brought him for the first time a wide public.) It was not Communism but the Soviet Government in which he had lost his faith. In any case the effect of these excursions has been to antagonise in turn almost every province of opinion. How indeed could a man make himself more generally disliked than by believing in the Gospels, disbelieving in private property, and practising pederasty?

But if it is impossible to agree with Gide, it seems to me difficult not to be fascinated by him. And he has now published the *Journal* that he has kept for fifty years (N.R.F., 130 francs). It contains over a half a million words, and is of unique interest, for no other writer of Gide's importance has confided to us any comparable document. It contains many enlightening, often malicious, details about a variety of personages, Mallarmé, Degas, Claudel, Valéry, Jammes, Charles-Louis Philippe, Roger Martin du Gard, Schlumberger, Copeau, Blum; and a wealth of comment upon literature and music. (Gide is a pianist who could have been a virtuoso.) But the superlatively fascinating subject is Gide himself. The portrait he paints of himself is in many ways unprepossessing, for if he is often unkind about his friends, he does not spare himself. Moreover, he takes to his journal chiefly when depressed—and in gloom one inevitably resorts to inelegant self-pity and self-justification. It is surprising to find him complaining about the failure of his books (in 1922, when he already enjoyed a European reputation); and it is ironical that fourteen years later he is groaning over their success; "Ah! l'heureux temps où je n'étais pas écouté! Et que l'on parle bien, tant qu'on parle dans le désert!" The diary of the last few years becomes less interesting, his decision to publish it in his lifetime making him, unintentionally, more discreet.

Gide has always been enigmatic, his enemies would say tortuous. He seems to find no difficulty in reconciling contrary emotions. With equal ardour he preaches the spirit and the senses, abnegation and incontinence: he pores over the logia of Christ, to whom his devotion is profound, and he finds in debauchery not merely pleasure but deep, untroubled happiness. The Journal illuminates, far better than any critic could, this double thread. "Je ne suis qu'un petit garçon qui s'amuse—doublé d'un pasteur protestant qui l'ennuie." (Note that the pastor is not bored but boring—I first read the word, most misleadingly, as "*s'ennuie*.") The cause he discovers in his heredity, which crosses in him two very different systems of life. In consequence:

> Rien ne se tient, rien n'est constant ni sûr, dans ma vie. Tour à tour je ressemble et diffère; il n'y a pas de créature si étrangère que je ne puisse jurer d'approcher. Je ne sais encore, à 36 ans, si je suis avare ou prodigue, sobre ou glouton . . . ou plutôt, me sentant porté soudain de l'un à l'autre extrême, dans ce balancement même je sens que ma fatalité s'accomplit. Pourquoi formerais-je, en m'imitant factícement moi-même, la factice unité de ma vie? C'est dans le mouvement que je peux trouver équilibre.

A passage written twenty years later continues the explanation—it is attributed to "T," but we cannot doubt that Gide is speaking of himself:

> Je n'ai jamais rien su renoncer; et protégeant en moi à la fois le meilleur et le pire, c'est en écartelé que j'ai vécu. Mais comment expliquer que cette cohabitation en moi des extrêmes n'amenât point tant d'inquiétude et de souffrance, qu'une intensification pathétique du sentiment de l'existence, de la vie? Les tendances les plus opposées n'ont jamais réussi à faire de moi un être tourmenté; mais perplexe—car le tourment accompagne un état dont on souhaite de sortir, et je ne souhaitais point d'échapper à ce qui mettait en vigueur toutes les virtualités de mon être; cet *état de dialogue* qui, pour tant d'autres, est à peu pres intolérable, devenait pour moi nécessaire.

To suppress the dialogue within oneself, he writes again, is to arrest the development of life; "Je ne sais plus bien qui je suis; ou, si l'on préfère: je ne suis jamais; je deviens."

The explanation of this duality, one may suggest, is more likely to be found in Gide's childhood than in his heredity. A more obvious instance of the Oedipus situation could hardly be found. Unfortunately, he has excised from his Journal almost all the references to his wife—which, he admits, results in his self-portrait being mutililated and incomprehensible. One can only guess at the influence upon his life of this saintly Protestant lady. We see that he loved her deeply, and while hating and fearing to wound her, forced himself continually to do so. One can further deduce that in her he rediscovered his mother. (Like Alissa in *La Porte Etroite* she was a cousin, older than himself; and Alissa—Gide emphasises the fact—resembled Jérôme's mother.) Upon this hypothesis we understand why for Gide love and desire have, as he tells us, always been separated. And this dichotomy in turn seems the source of the perpetual dialogue within him. On the one hand, in his country house in Normandy, the enveloping gentleness of domesticity, days at the writing-table, evenings of reading aloud in the lamplight, unruffled nights. On the other hand, travel, unfamiliar places, the desert and the waterfront, new faces, young bodies, the intoxication of the chase. For him both types of experience are fruitful, and the fact that the two cannot be enjoyed simultaneously does not diminish the validity of either. It is not Gide but his critics to whom this alternation is disquieting. The trouble is that he sometimes persuades himself that the Gospels authorise his libertinage; the boy amusing himself borrows the voice of the Protestant pastor.

As a novelist Gide (like Mauriac) benefits vastly from feeling the violent fascination of both the spirit and the senses. And his refusal to opt (as Mauriac does) for one party to this contest is a further aesthetic advantage. He defines his ideal of the novel as "a crossroads—a meeting-place of problems." Personally I prefer *L'Immoraliste* and *Les Caves du Vatican* to *La Porte Etroite*, in which the exquisiteness of the writing cannot conceal a certain *niaiserie*, a flavour at once sweet and insipid, like that of sago—even in *Les Faux Monnayeurs* Edouard seems to me a touch too high-minded. The little boy may be bored by the pastor, but he keeps looking for his approval. Few writers have been so persistently autobiographical as Gide, but his work not only reflects but modifies him. He tells us:

> que le livre, sitôt conçu, dispose de moi tout entier, et que, pour lui, tout en moi, jusqu'au plus profond de moi s'instrumente. Je n'ai plus d'autre personnalité que celle qui convient à cette œuvre—objective? subjective? Ces mots perdent ici tout leur sens; car s'il m'arrive de peindre d'après moi (et parfois il me parait qu'il ne se peut d'autre exacte peinture,) c'est que d'abord j'ai commencé par devenir celui-là même que je voulais portraiturer.

I do not know what other novelist has made this admission, or should one say this boast? In Gide's case one feels it to be particularly true. He has been not only Ménalque, Michel, the Prodigal Son, Lafcadio and Edouard, but Marcelline, Alissa, the pastor in *La Symphonie Pastorale* and Robert. Perhaps indeed it is the novelist's vocation that has obliged him to cultivate that duplicity (in no pejorative sense) which has baffled many of his readers. With a more integrated personality, the novelist would have been less richly equipped. "Chacun de mes livres a été jusqu'à présent" (he notes in 1932) "la mise en valeur d'une incertitude": and if his poetic powers are declining, it is because his perplexities decrease. These remarks can be commended to critics of the novel. There are others beside Gide, whose art may be the fruit and the

reward of an unintegrated personality—Henry James, I suggest, and Proust and perhaps even Tolstoy.

The most constant emotion in Gide—the thread that joins the Christian and the pagan—is his hatred of conventions, of comfort, of worldly bonds. "M'a toujours tourmenté le souci du moindre bagage," and his love of denudation extends to style: "Je souhaite une éloquence cachée." The result has sometimes been a certain colourlessness.

> Moins peintre que musicien, il est certain que c'est le mouvement, de préférence à la couleur, que je souhaitais à ma phrase. Je voulais qu'elle suivît fidèlement les palpitations de mon coeur.

Gide commenced author among the Symbolists and for a long while he allowed himself a preciosity, particularly in the syntax and placing of the words. In the Journal he quotes twice a phrase that lingers in his memory from an early poem of which he has no copy; "Froide à mes mains mais pour elles tiède, je sens, ah! dans cette eau brunie, ces vivantes racines heureuses." Affected, musical deliciously, accurate, this line reveals in Gide the scientist as well as the poet—the imagination of a Barrès would never have considered what was the temperature natural to a water-plant! Gide has been indefatigable in his pursuit of truth, and so exacting in regard to his own sincerity, that his candour has been called narcissism and exhibitionism. He refused in 1931 to write about the heroic anti-fascist de Bosis, despite his admiration, because he himself lacked faith in liberty: approving, as he then did, of the absence of liberty in Russia, he would not condemn a similar absence in Italy, different as he considered the purposes of the two states to be. And he makes his own the words of a Jansenist, words that every intellectual should have by heart: "Whatever your station or country," I translate as best I can, "you should believe only what is true, and what you would be disposed to believe if you were of another country, another station, another profession." Indeed the human quality dearest to Gide is disinterestedness, and his judgment on characters, whether in life or in his novels, depends upon the extent to which this quality obtains in them. This is the explanation of the famous *acte gratuit*, which has been so much misinterpreted, in *Les Caves du Vatican*—the murder of a stranger in a train. The act is unmotivated—or, it would be more accurate to say, it can be of no conceivable advantage to the murderer. Gide wished, he explains, to show that disinterestedness is not necessarily charitable; and, I think it fair to add, so fascinated is he by the beauty of disinterestedness, that he admires it even in the form of a crime.

The writer to whom Gide is closest is certainly Blake (whose *Marriage of Heaven and Hell* he has translated). His reserve, his dislike of the explicit, his obliqueness often remind me of Mr. E. M. Forster, though Gide is more adventurous and incomparably more lyrical. But imagine what the interest would be of a diary kept by Mr. Forster throughout his life, and you have a notion of the enjoyment to be derived from the Gide Journal. It is, I suppose, unreasonable to expect a publisher to give us an English translation of so vast a work. But it seems to me not only the most illuminating of Gide's works, but one of the salient books of our time.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

THE FRIENDLY NORTH

North Cape. By F. D. OMMANNEY. *Longmans.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

I Went to the Soviet Arctic. By RUTH GRUBER. *Gollancz.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Unsolved Mysteries of the Arctic. By VILHJALMUR STEFANSSON. *Harrap.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Like backing horses, deep-sea trawling is known to the initiate as a mug's game; and in the literature of work the mug's games are the best subjects. The steady job or the shock worker's competitive grind has, one must admit, its virtue and perhaps with a capital V; but it is only human to welcome a touch of sabotage to relieve the tedious hosannas of the Ten-Year Planners, and to have a special feeling for work which is a gamble. A good many writers on the dangerous trades nevertheless concentrate on the injustices and ardours suffered by men in mines and ships and pervert the case by overlooking the curious satisfactions which the chancey nature of a job provides. Stoicism and fatalism are not necessarily vices because they happen to irritate reformers and revolutionaries.

Mr. Ommanney's story of his voyage with a Grimsby trawler to the North Sea and Iceland has a proper appreciation of these points. The result is not merely a vivid sea book, of which there are plenty, but something more resonant with human character. The skipper and crew of the *Lincoln Star* went out on their regular expeditions, inured to a hard trade and with only one passion, which was to get back to Grimsby for another thirty-six hours and blow a good part of their earnings on beer and tarts, before the filthy job got them once more; and they were a pretty dour, dull lot of men on the surface. One gapes at their capacity for physical suffering; they seem to have the incomprehensible stamp of those who, for some reason, just have to be knocked about—a kind of stupor. The obvious thing is to label them fools, heroes or victims. But in Mr. Ommanney's pages these men gradually cease to be types and cases, and become individuals, held together by a sort of ritual. The *Lincoln Star* was full of ritual. Friday night, filling in the football coupons; Saturday, eating the cook's special iced cake; and there were things like the impenetrability of the fo'castle occupied by the "deckies" and the sacredness of the cook's tea kettle. Monotony is the great creator of eccentrics, and the sea turns out an extraordinary collection. Mr. Ommanney does not do the easy thing and write them up. He reveals each man, skin by skin, with the care of one peeling the subtle if common and pungent onion. There is the engineer, for example, with his preoccupation with death, repeating not out of obsession but with a kind of scientific artistry, the story of the death of his mother. There is the ship's gambler. There is the ship's boy, a half-caste, who seems to be merely a melancholy, gazing enigma until one day he puts his head into the saloon and casually announces he has knocked out the cook. The skipper, unexpectedly dapper and more like one's picture of an expert salesman than the ordinary meditative and omniscient nautical wisehead, has his moment of revelation. It is refreshing and unexpected. The catch is heavy and he is seen in his cabin shadow-boxing in his delight.

Mr. Ommanney has shown his power of giving simple men their due of life before; he is also an effective descriptive writer, quietly getting it across because he never overdoes it. The story of going into the ruined town of Blyth to coal and the account of the evening ashore in the dismal Tyneside pubs is admirable. It is a picture of half industrial England and, incidentally, contains a reflection which is worth quoting. Cinemas, tarts, pools and drink are not the only escapes. There are foreign politics:

> "Tell you what it will be next," he was saying, "—our colonies. That's what it'll be. 'E wants Tanganyika and South-West Africa, and the Cameroons. You see! But we shan't give 'em back. Can't do. Sacred duty to the natives. And look at Japan. She wants 'Ong Kong. Directly there's trouble here she'll pinch it. And look at Mussolini, he's got his eye on our interests in the Mediterranean . . ."
>
> Who, I wondered, had an eye on our interests in Blyth?

North Cape is an excellent and living document.

I don't feel the same warmth about Miss Gruber's lively and enthusiastic piece of reporting. Somehow the note is too high, personal and insistent. She went to the Soviet Arctic to discover how the status of women had been affected by the North. She had learned, as we all have, from Stefansson that the Arctic is or ought to be friendly, and that nevertheless "north of the tree line" in Alaska there are not more than a dozen or so European women; as a feminist she was therefore jubilant to discover that Russia's new timber port, Igarka, has the normal supply. And even a rather forbidding woman leader. Miss Gruber is too much the emphatic stunt journalist ("the youngest Doctor of Philosophy in the world") to be very readable, but the non-feminist material i.e. the picture of Soviet colonisation in the North, is interesting and specially to those who followed Stefansson's theory of the northward course of empire.

His book of unsolved Arctic mysteries is more than a popular retelling of the dramatic disappearances of the Arctic: the vanished Franklin expedition, the story of Andrée, the peculiar detective tale of the murders associated with Thomas Simpson, who put the final touches to the discovery of the North-West passage; it is a re-examination of the problems these mysteries raise, in the light of the enormously increased knowledge of the Arctic which people like Stefansson have given us. The most illuminating essay concerns the fate of the Soviet flyers who were lost not so very long ago, and in it Stefansson gives a fascinating account of what—by the "friendly Arctic" school—would be called the amenities of Polar flying. Up to the Russian tragedy (Stefansson gives any Arctic disaster six years to confirm itself) there had been no air losses in the Polar sea. V. S. PRITCHETT

THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION

The Week-end Review

AUTUMN BOOKS SUPPLEMENT

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21, 1939

EDVARD BENEŠ

Democracy, Today & Tomorrow

Democracy Today and Tomorrow, by the former President of Czechoslovakia, is a deeply inspired statement of our common aim and shared beliefs. It is a book which every man of democratic principles should read, not only to study the faith to which he gives his allegiance but to understand the dangers with which that faith is at present threatened. 8/6

HUGH WALPOLE The Sea Tower

"Sir Hugh's imaginative grasp of the situation (a possessive mother determined to hold on to the souls and bodies of her two sons) and his expressive dialogue keep one's attention fully gripped to the story. It is a novel that will not easily be forgotten."—*Daily Telegraph*. 7/6

DORMER CRESTON Enter a Child

Author of "The Regent and His Daughter"

"Miss Creston has repeopled the world of her golden childhood, called up elegant ghosts and given us lovely reminders of a happier, a supremely peaceful day; it might then have been disappointing to search the night heavens for a starry bear promised by adult knowledge but not recognised as a bear by the child; but anyhow one was sure, in those times, that the sky itself would not fall!"—*Times Lit. Supp.* 7/6

MALCOLM BULLOCK Austria

Captain Bullock has called his book in sub-title, *A Study in Failure*, and there is no other term which fits the history of post-war Austria. Its story is a combination of the grotesque and the absurd, and to read it is to feel that one is watching a tragedy acted to the airs of a musical comedy. 8/6

Early Autumn Successes

DOROTHY M. STUART The Daughters of George III

"This competent study of water-coloured lives spent in royal domesticity would be pleasant reading at any time and is now admirable escape literature. Miss Stuart writes flowing narrative and has used her sources with a nice sense of balance."—*Time and Tide*. Illustrated. 15/-

E. M. DELAFIELD Love Has No Resurrection

"These seventeen stories have the shrewdness, the malicious humour, and the unfailing resource which always make her books easy and inviting to read."—*Daily Herald*. 7/6

GERALD BULLETT The Jackdaw's Nest

A Fivefold Anthology. "I do not think that he has offered us—in his thousand pages—a single item that is not worthwhile."—*John o'London*. 10/6

MACMILLAN

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HOWARD SPRING *Illustrated.* 6s.

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LUDWIG RENN

'A front line soldier in two wars, and his realistic account of modern fighting from the soldier's point of view can rarely have been surpassed. Nothing that is said in this cogent, lucid, economical book is unimportant. It is full of stimulating ideas.'—*Spectator.* 8s. 6d.

★ A Surgeon's Destiny
the sequel to *The Healing Knife*
GEORGE SAVA

The Healing Knife which 'Country Life' referred to as 'that amazing autobiography, crammed with breathless excitement, calm wisdom, humanity and youth' was the story of a penniless White Russian and his struggles to become a surgeon. His new book is full of surprises and continues his adventures in Germany and in England, where Dr. Sava reaches his present position as a consulting surgeon with a West End practice. 8s. 6d.

★ Confessions of an Immigrant's Daughter
LAURA G. SALVERSON

This tale of a stormy life is like no other autobiography we know. Mrs. Salverson's parents came of noble Viking stock and migrated to Canada in '87. She miraculously lived through the most amazing vicissitudes, and her book is packed with characters and pictures that are startlingly real. In 1937 Mrs. Salverson won the Governor-General's Award for the best fiction of the year. 8s. 6d.

★ Always a Little Further
ALASTAIR BORTHWICK

An unusual book about the open air, adventure and climbing. There are nights spent in caves and barns, encounters with bird-watchers, gamekeepers, tinkers, hitch-hikers, etc., and such exciting experiences as ice-climbs and a foodless three days' march among the Cuillin of Skye. 7s. 6d.

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FICTION

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Mr. Collis's biographies, *Siamese White* and *She Was a Queen* have been repeatedly referred to as 'more exciting than fiction. His new book is fiction! 7s. 6d.

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WINIFRED PECK

Winifred Peck is the author of *The Skirts of Time*, *Coming Out*, etc. Her public has been steadily growing and she is one of the few authors whose books are bought long after the original 'library demand.' This seems to be the book everyone has been waiting for. 7s. 6d.

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MARJORIE MACK

'An exquisite novel recalling sights and sounds of holidays spent across the Channel—an enjoyable holiday.'—*John O'London's.* 7s. 6d.

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GALWAY

O the crossbones of Galway,
The hollow grey houses,
The rubbish and sewage,
The grass-grown pier,
And the dredger grumbling
All night in the harbour :
The war came down on us here.

Salmon in the Corrib
Gently swaying
And the water combed out
Over the weir
And a hundred swans
Dreaming on the harbour :
The war came down on us here.

The night was gay
With the moon and Venus
But Mars was angry
On the hills of Clare
And September dawned
Upon willows and ruins :
The war came down on us here.

September, 1939. LOUIS MACNEICE

THE ROMANTICS

ONCE there were autumn stirrings, the dew shaken by creatures
Stealthy from out the coldness of brambles and dawn; there sounded,
Heart-checking, the sweetest, wildest of horns in a distance
By gnarls of lichenous rampart and wolves and Merlin bounded.

Back in a cavern of memory pass to androgynous three-time
Muslins of exquisite ghouls between tartan and tombstone, making
Sudden room for the gauze and pomegranate wounds of the Giaour
And Leila, or Faust with desire and guilt alternative quaking.

Once there was time for Tyrian shades of ranging emotion;
Once we could slip in Crusader's blood of an afternoon,
Sigh with a nineteenth-century Hamlet's evening scruples,
And at night, Chopin would plunge us in rosy Majorcan swoon.

But a gong, deafening, rang; and we woke from the stained-glass drowsing
To racked muscle, red eyes, and a palate of earth, as the mane
Of the bridleless mare outflew, and the hoofs drummed, and we knew it;
We were one vast Mazeppa, alone in the vast Ukraine!

And now by the Hetman's demon we are carried down falls of brimstone,
And then again over sand to where suns cannot set,
And moaning, we swallow storm, we are singed by that lovely lightning,
And no Cossack houri to wipe our forehead! And yet—

Through the delirium's veils there glows that knowledge's rushlight;
Long, long after, a lady, the same, yet not the same,
Will rise at dusk and peer through high windows at yew-trees,
Or scan the pool of a picture in the four calm walls of a frame.

DERWENT

THE GIRLS

The Daughters of George III. By DOROTHY MARGARET STUART. *Macmillan.* 15*s.*

George III's three eldest daughters, Matilda, Augusta, Elizabeth, were born within four years; they were unreservedly welcome, for when they began to arrive there were already three princes to assure the succession. Three more princes followed Elizabeth, making a space of six years between her and Mary, the next and fourth princess. A year after Mary came Sophia; then two more short-lived princes created another space before Amelia, the last of the family. The princesses thus fell into two age-groups of three, and this grouping of interests held good throughout their lives. In turn, each grew from a dignified, dressy baby into a blond, pretty child, then up into a fine girl. Their figures filled out, their features coarsened a little, and still those girlhoods had to protract themselves. In those days of early blooming and early marriage, the protraction was cruelly out of order; the Princess Royal took it as special mortification, the five others seemed to take it as fate. The princesses were admired; they had showy complexions, they were all big-limbed except Sophia, " the elf," who was *petite*. None of them inherited Queen Charlotte's dark colouring, her aplomb or her *méchanceté*. As young girls they inspired delicious portraits: the two Gainsboroughs, of Princesses Augusta and Mary, depict gazelle-like creatures, pouting, mysterious. And in the Copley group an impossibly happy light falls on the younger trio, Mary and Sophia as little girls in fichus, Amelia the plumed baby, with a tambourine and puppies, gambolling under a vine.

In real life their gambols were muted. Adulation and constant delicious food (they were all hearty, happy eaters, up to their old ages) does not supply everything, even for little girls. From their mother they got that untender and rigid love some very fecund women keep for their growing young. George III's recurrent, then chronic, illness of mind kept the Queen in a fierce, tense mood, and she saw to it that the girls were tensed up too. Their family life at Kew, at Windsor, at Weymouth, was constantly shadowed and always sequestrated. Enthusiastic and sympathetic ladies surrounded the Queen and the girls; the princesses had no court pleasures; their only public appearance was the detested formal promenade, on the terrace at Windsor, along the Weymouth front. The brothers, as they grew up, became *affairés*, important, and with their tutors left for a wider world. The princesses remained, and their sensibilities burgeoned, in that steam-heated, hyper-feminine atmosphere. Their father's condition became a charge on their pity—through this, and their royal training, the King-father myth continued to dominate them. With the Queen their relationship, as they all grew up, was emotional, subtle, profoundly uneasy beneath the smother of " love." Pious, ardent and plain, the Queen knew how to employ, with her girls at least, the arts of a spoiled beauty. She took a defeat finally—but then died, and the old neurosis sprang up again: in chapel, they had to go past her empty chair. The Princess Royal stayed locked up in herself, in her blushing awkwardness, in her longing to marry—and she was happily married and out of it when the final clash

with the Queen came. With the other five girls, fountains of sensibility, brother-worship developed—and what an outlet it was. They wrote letters to all their brothers, but wrote most of all to G.P., the Prince Regent. G.P. reciprocated their tender kindness—as an elder brother he was quite admirable.

The princesses' buoyancy, their gusto and dignity is surprising, given their circumstances. They write to G.P. of illnesses (mostly of nervous origin) frustrated loves and incurable money-troubles—they had allowances which they all of them overspent. They were not dangerously neurotic, and only Sophia appears a little smugly silly—even she had palpable "go" and charm. On the whole, they had sound natures. Did education do much? The Queen herself instructed them in religion, but the rest of their education was supervised by the clear-headed and amiable Lady Charlotte Finch, and her two indomitable lieutenants, and buffers, Miss Goldsworthy and Miss Gomm. From appropriate masters they learned languages, and each princess except Sophia wrote a clear, stylish hand—they learned means, in fact, to express if not to order their thoughts. They were taught the accomplishments—drawing, music, the ingenious use of the needle. No teacher seems to have claimed for any one princess spectacular talent in any one of the arts. But how foolish to decry the accomplishments—the sheltered woman's sole tactile hold on life. The bore, the yearner, the introspective woman, the woman tiresome to herself and others has increased since accomplishments were discredited. The futility of the achievement counts less than the virtue achieving gives. Accomplishments—and they were very mediocre—shored the princesses up in a cloudy, insane world. The Princess Royal, once married, settled down to paint china at Würtemberg. Princess Augusta, at her piano, pleased herself and pleased those who liked her better than music with her "compositions," mild reminiscent airs. A brother stood charmed by the piano, in the autumn dusk at Frogmore, and Tom Moore listened with great ease. Vehement Princess Elizabeth, for years "wishing to settle," solaced herself with arts and crafts, "japanning" entire rooms at Frogmore, publishing series of drawings on noble themes. Princess Mary wept at her wedding to Silly Billy, then took to gardening at Bagshot. Princess Sophia thanked heaven she was never at a loss for something to do. In her old age, when she was blind, she endlessly tore up paper into fine scraps, to fill pillows for invalids. Ill health and love for Fitzroy occupied Princess Amelia during her short life, but she loved to read novels. All the sisters had their charities—impetuous spending, kindly solicitudes.

Nurses, foster-mothers, stayed in the princesses' backgrounds, comforted sickbeds, wept at belated weddings. All the girls found a confidant in Lady Harcourt—visits to Nuneham make some delicious scenes. Lady Harcourt, indefatigable optimist, indefatigable would-be matchmaker, raised their spirits with talk of possible marriages. For the girls, at once so eager and natural, the years, those years of disenchanted seclusion, went by at once too slowly and too fast. To love was fatally easy; it was not easy to "settle." Their religion restricted the royal marriage market. Eligibles were chiefly in Germany, mostly widowers, mostly pretty uncouth. Elizabeth made a bid for Louis Philippe; the marriage she did in the end make was the cue for one of Napoleon's spiteful remarks. In simple terms, the girls, sequestered even from brothers, met very few young men. Gentlemen holding office near the family circle were not young, were the acme of steadiness, and were properly conscious of their position as commoners. But on three of such gentlemen, three princesses fixed their hearts. Princess Augusta's love for General Sir Brent Spencer was returned fully, and was (we are given reason to hope) consummated in a secret marriage. It was love of the *Persuasion* quality, patient and dignified. Sophia's rape of respectable General Garth (of which the incredibility led to a scandal later) and Amelia's infatuation for the blockish Fitzroy were less happy, in fact were regrettable. Sophia carried off her role of unmarried mother with remarkable cheek and style, and sustained the Cumberland scandal with elderly stoicism; poor Amelia, succumbing, left an unfortunate will. To what extent the sisters were in each other's confidence it is not possible to be quite clear: the Prince Regent took the full blast of the love troubles; at all events, it must all be kept from the Queen.

The characters of the six princesses emerge in Miss Stuart's six chapters. Miss Stuart could not have used her material better—with less portentousness, with more dispassionate reasoning, with fewer flights. The princesses' characters, as is the case with most women, are more interesting than their destinies. The crux, for the Princess Royal, was marriage—which, though late, unromantic, childless, was fulfilment: she did well as a queen. But the crux for the five others was not marriage, not even love (except for Princess Amelia), it was the intense drama of their break with the Queen. This great revolt of the girls, this group of girls in their thirties, could have been epoch-making had it been widely known. Princess Augusta penned the joint ultimatum letter, and it was she who came in from her ride that morning to take the brunt of the storm. G.P. had backed the girls up, but G.P. was somewhere else. Successions of nerve storms swept the younger princesses, but Augusta, the most truly sensitive of them, could not permit herself sensibility . . . Princess Elizabeth was always too fat—she was "artistic," positive, loved yellow ostrich feathers and once wore eleven standing up in her hair. Her personality is a shade repellent. She married, at a mature age, the Hereditary Prince, later Landgrave, of Hesse-Homburg. Princess Mary, the beauty, the "perfect Miny," tactful, patient, serene, married her cousin the Duke of Gloucester, alias "Silly Billy," "the Cheese," "the Slice," and tided over little troubles he made. Sophia's elfishness got her into a double scrape, and Amelia, the King's darling, was sickly, loved vainly, died.

The Daughters of George III could have filled six volumes; Miss Stuart's one volume is a *tour de force* of compression, which expands in the memory. Her method is straight and lucid, and she has overlooked nothing that could be significant. Her choice of quotations from letters shows a strict intelligence, and her analysis could not be better done. Elizabeth Bowen

THE NEW DEAL

America in Mid-Passage. By Charles A. Beard and Mary R. Beard. *Cape.* 18*s.*

Mr. and Mrs. Beard here recount American history in the last ten years. In many respects, the volume is a worthy sequel to their classic *Growth of American Civilisation*. It has the same encyclopaedic scope, the same power to seize essential principles, the same broad and vigorous humanism. There is no art more difficult than a history of one's own age, not least of an age in which the writers themselves have been an influence of outstanding intellectual significance. But Mr. and Mrs. Beard are remarkably successful. If the chapters on the arts and sciences tend rather to be an inclusive catalogue than an incisive judgment, they have at least balance and poise. The book is written from the angle of a critical sympathiser with the internal aspects of the New Deal who is, at the same time, a convinced isolationist on the foreign side. That makes it all the more urgent that it should be read here. For unless we can understand sympathetically what makes Americans of the Beards' stature isolationist, we cannot understand America; and to understand America is to have the clue to a good deal of future history.

To have projected on to a unified plane the history of these ten years is a remarkable achievement. They have been turbulent years, in which the United States has been compelled, for the first time since the Civil War, to go deep into its own foundations. They are the record, on the one hand, of the final breakdown of the business man's theory of American civilisation, and, on the other, of large social and economic experiments, mostly half-articulate, chaotically planned, yet all moving in a direction which offers hope. They show an America uncertain of itself, bewildered by the complexity of its problems, willing, if I may so phrase it, to try everything so long as nothing is tried profoundly. They reveal the degree to which a society which seeks to escape from the prison of its past yet remains bound to it. There are here exhilaration, a tempo of extraordinary vigour, and a sense that the result achieved is never really adequate to the expenditure involved in the effort.

Certain things stand out. The structure of American federalism is obsolete. A redistribution of powers is essential if the main purposes of the new America are to be realised. Though there is a temporary liberal majority on the Supreme Court, the power of judicial review looks, at a distance, far more obnoxious than even the veto of the House of Lords. The Presidential system maximises the opportunity of what Bentham used to call "sinister interest" to hamper and hamstring the realisation of the national will. There have been remarkable administrative experiments in the last decade; from some of them, at any rate, our own Civil Service has a great deal to learn. We have nothing to compare with the achievement of the T.V.A. or the cultural innovations—now largely killed by Congress—of the Works Progress Administration. But the outstanding success of the whole record is that

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of the President. He has made big mistakes; he has had great failures; he has often been uncertain of his direction. But anyone who studies carefully Mr. and Mrs. Beard's analysis of the opposition he has had to encounter, of the divided loyalties upon which he has had to rely, will find it difficult not to conclude that this is the greatest piece of leadership the United States has had since Lincoln. And it is a curious commentary on the American system that, just as its foundations are being laid, the traditional principle of Presidential office should prepare to return its occupant to private life. It is easier in America to get rid of a great President than it is in England to get rid of a poor Prime Minister.

An Englishman may perhaps be pardoned, especially at this time, for finding the Beards' defence of American isolationism emotionally intelligible rather than intellectually sound. It is based on an ultimate denial of the interdependence of nations, and its unstated assumption is that of American self-sufficiency. But I suspect that if one could cross-examine the Beards, one would find that their attitude is mainly born of a bitter disappointment at the results of the last war; they are not ready to believe again in the possibilities of a successful crusade. Their view is really a repudiation of a world in which America is inextricably tangled, a refusal to face facts of which the impact is as grim as with ourselves, a fear that war may shatter the fragile foundations of democracy in America, and make room for those "raucous voices," as Mr. Wells calls them, against which the Beards' own life has been so magistral a protest. Their chapter seems to me a noble escapism—but still escapism. I add that our own responsibility for this attitude is a heavy one. Those who desire to know why such generous minds shut out as much of the European problem as they can from their horizon should reflect upon the history of appeasement in this country. The process which culminated in Munich may have won the applause of Wall Street; that is not an adequate compensation for the sympathies it has lost us. Those who know the Beards and what they represent best will best know also how worth-while it is to regain the faith they have decided to forgo.

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Oxford. By Christopher Hobhouse. *Batsford.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

In the structure of our most treasured national institutions—a fact that foreign critics have now begun to grasp—there is an elasticity often verging on downright formlessness. We have an instinctive respect for an institution that has been allowed to *grow*—however haphazard and uncontrolled the growing process—a deep repugnance to the systematic and the ready-made. Thus our cities are not constructions: they are conglomerations. Our laws bear the same relation to the spick-and-span *Code Napoléon* as the streets of London to the avenues of Paris. Our educational system is both complicated and anachronistic; for it has been laid down over a period of a thousand years and preserves many curious fossils in its crumbling strata, though its outer surface may support a green crop of youth and intelligence. The Oxford scene, in spite of reformers and modernisers, Cambrian socialists within, enterprising manufacturers without the city, retains the variety, oddity and prodigal untidiness of an English landscape.

Given the opportunity, you can make of it whatever you please. In no other seat of learning, ancient or modern, is it so easy to escape from the embarrassments of intellectual effort—either by a slavish conformity to scholastic routine or by treating that routine with the contempt it deserves. Yet, supposing you are anxious to learn and think, the means are ready to hand. Not very explicitly or even deliberately, Oxford suggests that the real value of knowledge is that you yourself should have been determined to acquire it—and of experience, that it should have been harvested by yourself alone. Oxford places no premium on rapid development. How many of its successes have been apparent failures! How many of its intellectual giants—"really first-rate minds" discussed with respect in the Senior Common Room—have dwindled into the deep obscurity of some government office, prematurely exhausted by the struggle for honour! That the average don should take a very different view of his functions—and that the average level of donnish intelligence should be by no means startling—is unimportant compared with the general influence that Oxford exercises.

Mr. Hobhouse loves the place and writes of it feelingly. His book is built up of successive historical excursions, each period being studied first in terms of what it was, then in terms of what it now is or, rather, of what it has left behind. With so much material to choose from—so much information to convey and gossip to report—Mr. Hobhouse's task cannot have been easy; but his volume (though it does not pretend to be an exhaustive chronicle) is clear, entertaining and briskly opinionated. Oxford has always been a Tory stronghold; and Mr. Hobhouse's crustiness on certain subjects is as picturesque and unexpected as Oxford architecture. Now and then, he positively snaps the reader's head off. P. B. Shelley indeed! You don't mean that silly young man who circularised the heads of colleges with a pamphlet on atheism? Of course, he was sent down; and "very rightly" too! "A singularly tiresome youth," one can't deny. As for Landor—he behaved "with equal childishness." Left-wing dons are anathema to Mr. Hobhouse; he has stern views on the Ashmolean and museums generally—"kleptomaniac institutions" that would be better abolished; while, on the theme of female undergraduates—making no allowances whatever for narrow purses—he delivers himself of some exceedingly acid paragraphs:

> The assiduity of the women undergraduates is stupefying. After the long morning's round of lectures they swarm to the Bodleian. Radcliffe Square is black with their bicycles. After dark, in their own college libraries or in their comfortless little college rooms, they huddle for hours on end, stooping and peering over standard text-books. . . . They run no tailors' bills in the High Street, but deck themselves in hairy woollens and shapeless tweeds. Germer's luxurious hairdressing saloons are unknown to them; their hair is braided into stringy buns. Their domestic background is equally repellent. Instead of a quiet pair of rooms, guarded by an impenetrable "oak," upon a secluded staircase, each girl has a minute green-and yellow bed-sitter opening off an echoing shiny corridor. Instead of deep sofas and coal fires, they have convertible divans and gas stoves. Instead of claret and port, they drink cocoa and Kia-Ora. Instead of the lordly breakfasts and luncheons which a man can command in his own rooms, they are fed on warm cutlets and gravy off cold plates at a long table adorned with daffodils.

Finally—and even more inexcusably—he attacks the row of crumbling Roman worthies outside the Sheldonian Theatre, one of the most lovable and most characteristic of Oxford landmarks.

But Mr. Hobhouse can be as appreciative as elsewhere he is critical. Not only does he appreciate Oxford itself and the standards with which it has inoculated English life: he writes

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affectionately and entertainingly of its college buildings. Sometimes, indeed, his enthusiasm is over-done. Magdalen Tower, for example, has the charm of age; but I refuse to regard it as "one of the jewels of Oxford"—beside other towers of the same period it is almost stumpy. Much of Oxford's Tudor architecture is poor and cramped, pretty enough but neither imaginative nor well-proportioned. We pass on with relief to Wren and Hawksmoor. . . . *Oxford* is admirably illustrated with photographs, drawings, prints and maps. It makes a fine addition to the delightful series of Batsford picture-books. PETER QUENNELL

CHATEAUBRIAND

Chateaubriand. By JOAN EVANS. *Macmillan.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Miss Evans's life of Chateaubriand is the kind of book that fills one with surprise and dismay. Not that she has any cause to blush for it. People want biography of this type (I suppose they do, for the supply is increasing and uncomplained-of); Miss Evans has produced what they seem to want, and that with very little offence. Her book is intelligent and sympathetic, fairly humorous, not badly written. It is neither supercilious nor cheap. It is extremely well informed. There is nothing wrong with it, except the whole idea, and the assumption that "classics" are unbearable at first hand.

If they are, why should the life of a classic author have *any* public? This book is designed for persons who have never read Chateaubriand, and are not going to, and who can't stomach him even in quotation. Yet it is chiefly put together from the volumes they won't approach. It is made up of loans. They are confused with the text; adaptation has destroyed nearly all their beauty, and half their interest; you don't know when they occur, or what is the source of any remark. But there are no inverted commas. And that's the main point; inverted commas are too serious and alarming. It seems we have lost our teeth, and can't bear the spectacle of something to chew.

This mushing up of the classics is a poor trick, and shows our culture in a poor light. Frequently it is dishonest as well; half-informed biographers make their subject do all the work, and ignorant reviewers give them the credit. There is no dishonesty here. Miss Evans tells us right out that her work is based on the *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*, "often to the point of translation." Her avoidance of quotation marks is not cheating, and the resulting fog is not deliberate. She has simply gone about her task in the usual way, the way that seems to be liked. But I have hardly ever been more surprised that it should be liked, or more depressed by the senility of the age.

How does the Chateaubriand we avoid compare with the Chateaubriand we find acceptable? I will give an instance. On page 4 of her book, Miss Evans writes: "The last child, François René, was born on the 4th September, 1768, more dead than alive, in the middle of a howling gale."

Brief, but adequate. Now for Chateaubriand's—I was going to say famous—description of the same event:

> J'étais presque mort quand je vins au jour. Le mugissement des vagues, soulevées par une bourrasque annonçant l'équinoxe d'automne, empêchait d'entendre mes cris: on m'a souvent conté ces details; leur tristesse ne s'est jamais effacée de ma mémoire. Il n'y a pas de jour où, rêvant à ce que j'ai été, je ne revoie en pensée le rocher sur lequel je suis né, la chambre où ma mère m'infligea la vie, la tempête dont le bruit berça mon premier sommeil, le frère infortuné qui me donna un nom que j'ai presque toujours traîné dans le malheur.

It takes a good while, and he is even more long-winded than that. But having read it, you know more about the author, as man and artist, than you could learn from pages of exposition. You can almost reconstruct him, as they construct an animal from a single bone. And if you are neither charmed nor amused, it follows that you have no interest in Chateaubriand, and need not trouble to read his life. Whereas Miss Evans's statement (though unavoidable) can neither charm nor amuse, and in fact is almost without significance. Yet we prefer our *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe* in that form.

But, assuming that Chateaubriand's works are not to be read, ought his Life to be an abridgment and paraphrase of the works? Is that the best way to manage? I'm sure it's not; length and dullness, whatever people think, are not directly related, and what is charming in itself may be very tedious when boiled down. Chateaubriand's travels in the east are a good example. He wrote a book on them: and so Miss Evans has allowed them more space than they deserve, and made them an infliction of the first water. That is the dullest part of her narrative, but the method is a failure all through. It does no justice to Chateaubriand's picture of himself, and yet it leaves no room for a different picture.

I should have liked to praise this book. Except at moments, it is very far from unreadable. It is attractive where Chateaubriand is most attractive—in the account of his youth at Combourg; next to that, I liked the pathetic description of his old age. There is some heavy going in between, but you never cease to respect the author. Most writers who do this kind of thing contrive to make bad worse by their way of doing it—and so they partly conceal the badness of the thing itself. Miss Evans has done it irreproachably, and one can't help seeing that it is all wrong.

K. JOHN

ROGER FRY'S LAST LECTURES

Last Lectures. By ROGER FRY. Introduction by SIR KENNETH CLARK. *Cambridge.* 21*s.*

It is fortunate that these lectures have found an admirable and painstaking editor, and for usher no less an authority than Sir Kenneth Clark; for without the care of one and the critical and expository skill of the other they would have been unreadable almost. With the exception of the first three, which luckily are the most important, they are not lectures at all but notes for lectures. Roger Fry was perhaps the most brilliant lecturer of his age; and, like all first-rate performers, depended much on the inspiration of the moment, and especially on the inspiration of the slide. What he had to impart were ideas of exquisite subtlety and of some complexity often—the sort of ideas for which it is well-nigh impossible to find words; but when he lectured with the image before him words he found; it was a joy and a wonder to hear him. It is not to be supposed that these scraps jotted down as likely as not in a railway carriage or on an omnibus represent anything like the complete development of his thought. To have given them coherence and intelligibility is a feat for which the editors deserve well of civilised society, since these last thoughts are of

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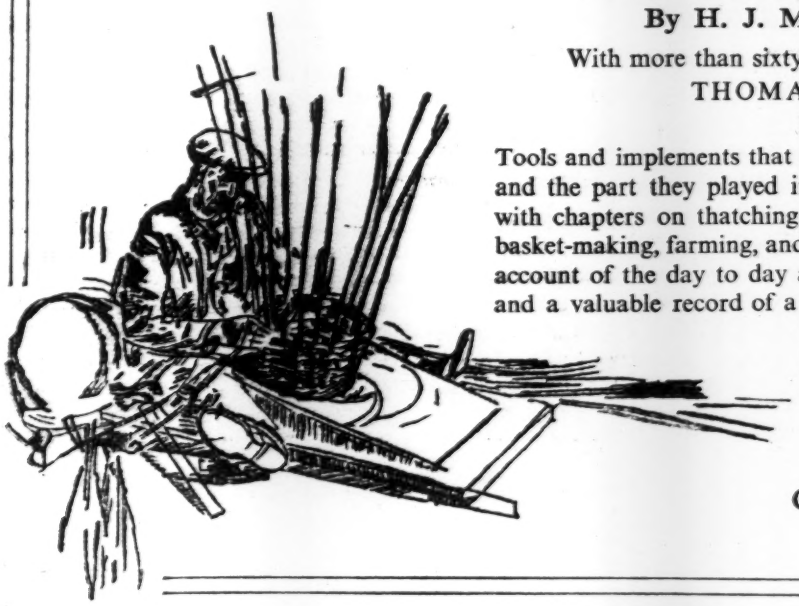

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the highest importance to all who care for art or ideas. Sir Kenneth Clark and his collaborator have made a book of them, and a readable book; though it must be confessed that the repetitions, inevitable in lecture notes, make reading a weariness at times.

The introduction, besides elucidating the train of Fry's thought and making plain the nature of the problems posed, has considerable value of its own and will be read with profit and delight. Let me admit, at once, that when the critic differs from the lecturer I am apt to be on the side of the latter. And I am sure it would have given Fry a moment of amusement and possibly of surprise to discover that, confronted with blasphemy, even the most intelligent and unprejudiced of directors is made to look like a director. For Roger Fry commits the unpardonable sin: he declines to swallow Greek art whole. Yet what reverent Hellenist has praised the Theseus or the Parcae more feelingly or with such fine understanding? Only the noble and uplifting sculpture of the golden age, the art untrammelled by superstition and unbowed to tyranny, the art of free men, the ideal beauty, the glory that was Greece, is put on trial alongside Chinese, Mahometan, Medieval, Modern and Negro, and in some respects judged inferior. To make matters worse, Fry gives reasons for his judgments, and elaborates a distinction—a distinction of the utmost importance, I believe—between conceptual definition and the rendering of appearance. Also he gives examples; and I will confess that the comparison of the Ludovisi Flute-Player—which I had admired unreservedly and admire still—with a figure by Maillol, for a moment took my breath away, but convinced me in the end. The contrast of the running figure from Eleusis with the Entombment of the Virgin at Senlis seems to me less happy. I find it hard to believe that this particular piece of twelfth-century sculpture was the lecturer's choice, or, for that matter, that it is twelfth century. Be that as it may, Sir Kenneth dismisses Fry's contention—that a visual art which expresses the high sentiments to be found in Greek literature may yet be second-rate—as "*the reductio ad absurdum* of the pure aesthetic response." He sustains his view with eloquence, Fry supports his with arguments and instances. It is not to be supposed that Sir Kenneth Clark's judgment is conditioned by his position. His dissent from Fry's opinion of the Olympia pediments and metopes is personal and profound; and it would have been fascinating to hear them "argue it very learnedly." Nevertheless, as criticism of these lectures, and for that matter of the Introduction too, will probably show, symptoms of a strange museum malady still exist; and one would give much to have Fry's diagnosis. How wittily would he have recounted, how ingeniously analysed, the history of that invincible bee which infests the bonnets of professors.

Not but what Fry harboured a small nest of these undesirable insects under his own broad brim. In his last years, at all events, he became obsessed by such words and phrases as "volumes," "planes," "rhythmic unity," "plastic sequence"; and occasionally, I think, his magnificent honesty notwithstanding, he put his emotions at the service of his theories. But in the end native honesty and open-mindedness generally got the best of it. Those who remember his instinctive dislike of Indian art will appreciate the candour, the unblunted sensibility, the freedom from bias and the studious care to which his lecture on this subject bears witness. If they recall also his age and standing at the time he wrote, they will probably be amazed. The detection of similarities between Hindoo art and Italian baroque, and still more between Hindoo sculpture and German rococo, is acute and helpful. (I confess that I cannot discover in the relief from Ellora the smallest connection with Degas). Also, the way in which this old master of criticism makes himself receptive to the qualities of what most critics call "decadent Greek art"—an uplifting name for "Hellenistic"—is significant. It signifies a capacity for feeling and thinking freely, which is the mark, not of a great critic only, but of a great mind.

Fully to appreciate the importance of this book one must think of it, not as a collection of notes for lectures, but as the adumbration of a history—a history which, had Fry lived to write it, would have been unlike all others because it would have been a history of art. It would have been the only history of art that had ever been written. All art historians with whose work I am acquainted have given body to their speculations and appraisements by connecting art with something else. At best they have connected it with movements of ideas and general culture, at worst with politics and military prowess. Fry understood the matter so deeply, a work of art meant so much to him and he could get so much from it, that he was not obliged to connect it with anything else—though occasionally he did, and very agreeably too. Thus he is able to go right behind those superficial criteria—verisimilitude, technical accomplishment, approximation to the machine-made or conformity to the Greek ideal, which, employed by most historians, make nonsense of most art-history. Nonsense they make because they make one feel that the historian is not writing about art at all. His criteria, being non-aesthetic, would be irrelevant, even were his material—the unessential properties of works of art—to the purpose. His conclusions are inevitably wide of the mark. If he be knowing, he will eke out his scanty aesthetic store and entertain us with biographies of artists and even with anecdotes about the men and women who posed for them; more ambitious, he will record the development of processes or give a brisk account of the rise, decline and fall of some phase of civilisation. Such matters are not unamusing, and may, or may not, have something to do with art: art they are not.

Roger Fry goes straight to the work itself, and, thanks to extraordinary receptivity, a power of analysis and a gift of exposition, disengages and reveals genuine artistic qualities. In these lectures he professes to be in search only of Sensibility and Vitality—his chapter on sensibility is the most important in the book and one of the best things he ever wrote—but in fact he touches on others. In the History which he should have written it would have been these essential qualities that he would have attempted to describe and illustrate, to relate in time and space, and to account for. His history would have been a history, not of culture, nor of artists even, but of art. It would have been unique.

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important as, let us say, margarine for the life of a contented community. Reduced to a solid diet of classical authors and good prose, many people would find their glands not working properly. Detection-deficiency would be a terrible disease, but luckily we shall not be called upon to diagnose its symptoms yet awhile. Supplies can be guaranteed for many weeks ahead and there is so far no talk of rationing.

I had been waiting confidently for Mr. Percival Wilde's next detective work. After *Mystery Week-End* one could expect nothing but the best, for his admirable detective-reporter, Mr. Doty, was cut out for a long and successful career. But in *Inquest* Doty has to wait in the wings and we only hear his name mentioned —at the end of a long distance telephone. For Mr. Wilde has not been able to bring himself yet to writing his next essay in straight detection. As he says himself in a foreword, in *Inquest* he is "primarily concerned with character and background." The background is the life of Taunton, a small country town in Connecticut; the characters are mainly the local inhabitants conducting an inquest. A successful lady authoress, who had resided for many years at Taunton, gave a party for her seventieth birthday. First one and then another of her guests is found shot in a summerhouse. The mystery is elucidated by what might appear to be the tedious procedure of giving all the verbatim statements of the witnesses before the Coroner. But Mr. Wilde is too familiar with play-writing to allow us a dull moment; there is padding to be sure, but he knows how to pad on velvet paw. Any one who stickles for detection will find enough clues to solve the problem half-way through, but most people will be content to amble alongside the Coroner, a delightfully shrewd New Englander who almost makes up for the absence of Doty. *Inquest* confirms the belief that Mr. Wilde can write first-class detection whenever he wants to, in whatever shape he chooses to present it.

Mr. Dickson Carr would never get far with a novel which relied on character and background for its main interest. Fortunately he has never been obliged to try. *The Black Spectacles* is just such another stupendous exercise in ingenuity as *The Reader is Warned* of Mr. Dickson Carr's *alter ego*, which was reviewed a month ago. The plots of these Siamese twins, Carter Dickson and Dickson Carr, are as complicated as the insides of a motor car and just as surprisingly efficient, but it would be madness to use flesh and blood for any of the parts required; pasteboard is the only material to stand the strain. In *The Black Spectacles*, for a pleasant change, the murder does not occur in a hermetically sealed chamber but is deliberately staged in front of three witnesses. Marcus Chesney is a man who believes that no one is really aware of what he sees: so he arranges an observation test. From a dark room three people are to watch a short performance flood-lit on an improvised stage. Afterwards they are to answer a series of questions on what they have seen, and their answers will be checked by a cinematograph record taken simultaneously. Further, the three observers are warned that Chesney intends to mislead them to the utmost of his ability. On the stage Chesney is seen sitting at his desk; a muffled figure enters wearing gloves and dark spectacles, takes a pill out of its pocket, forces Chesney to swallow it, and departs; Chesney pretends to collapse, then steps forward and declares the performance over. "Who was the muffled figure?" he is asked; "Only my secretary," he replies. But the next minute he is dead from cyanide, and the secretary is found in the offing, stunned with a poker. Who has been wearing the black spectacles? And why do all the witnesses disagree in their answers to the list of questions Chesney left in his pocket? This time it is not a single trick on which Mr. Carr depends to baffle us, but a whole box of tricks; his conjuring is fool proof—and almost Fell-proof. Not quite, however; for Dr. Fell spots the crucial clue, as you can do, if you're clever enough.

The Riddle of the Roost is never officially solved. Mr. Brock has constructed a perfect crime without a chink in the criminal's armour. This is disheartening; and all Sergeant Venn's painstaking unravelling and reconstruction of the murders only tempers our disappointment. After all, our guess is as good as Sergeant Venn's, and we are free to make it as early in the book as we please. Insoluble crimes in fiction are like chess-problems with alternative solutions, an exercise of the mind uncrowned with satisfaction. All Mr. Brock's neat technique cannot alter that stubborn fact.

Red Gardenias and *Cancelled in Red* are of tough male American material, but neither will make your jaws ache. There is the usual shooting, drinking, snapping into it and out of it, but without enough solid conviction behind the pugnacious style. Mr. Latimer has written faster, slicker stuff and may be tiring; Mr. Pentecost won a £250 prize for this first effort of his, and may develop a genuine punch, once he drops his inhibitions.

Miss Reilly follows the female American tradition of Mrs. Eberhart, where the heroine only just contains her mounting hysteria by clapping her mouth. It is hoped that a sort of secondary pleasurable hysteria will be induced in the reader, but that only occurs when there appears sufficient justification for the original panic. In *Dead for a Ducat* the heroine's emotion on finding her lover suspected of murdering her grandfather is overtaxed. There is a trite substratum of plot, but the halo of horror the authoress tries to impose on her heroine is not impressive. The lover is all too innocent and no one really wants to hurt a hair of her pretty little head.

The yeomen of English detection are well represented by Mr. Lorac. Soundness of plot is their merit, slowness of action their defect; their style seems founded on the stolid tramp of the British Police Force. Inspector Macdonald goes his rounds in *Black Beadle* with every virtue but celerity. Hear him talking when he finds himself in the Thames after dark, "You shan't get me, London's river. Damn you, you shan't." Never in a hurry, never at a loss, a paragon of an Inspector in any predicament.

Mourning After is a jaunty little story of sin and retribution in Devonshire. The central figure is a singularly malignant young man, who arrives from London to torment his relations, after hearing he would inherit £65,000 if he could prove his uncle was murdered. Miss Johnson shows great zest for local colour, but she only uses crime as a stimulus to malicious characterisation. She is clever enough at that to be forgiven for neglecting our detective faculties.

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bleached his bones and rotted away the idiosyncrasy surrounding his personality. Maybe the critic has to try to break through a false reputation, a temporary affair of give and take between passing events and the moods, tastes, selfishnesses and angers of the man. This sphere of activity may be important enough; indeed, some of our younger writers demand, in Mr. Grigson's words, that poetry should be judged by this surface of the poet's life and his expression of it, in "the language in which one is angry about Spain or in which one is pleasant or unpleasant to one's wife."

But the trouble is that these things die away, becoming slightly comic, like photographs of lovely women in hats of 1905. It is dangerous to judge a poet by his fashionableness, his smartness. He may not survive one or two neglected contemporaries who still write verse with inversions and stilted use of *thee* and *thou*. Poetry itself, the lasting element, is more essential.

These are difficult matters to have to consider, especially in the work of a man like Mr. Turner, who is so strongly divided between his emphemeral and his real self. Readers of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION know him familiarly as a character. They read him in these pages every fortnight, and recognise his irregularities of mood, taste, and prejudice. Many are infuriated by him. Others laugh at him. Some find his swift changes and altered enthusiasms endearing; others accuse him of perversity and wilfulness. This controversy, however, does not matter in relation to his poetry. We come here to something quite remote.

What is that something? I find it hard to answer. There is a danger of impertinence in trying to do so. After all, a poet's lifework is a very single matter, an isolated activity; and a second person who comes shouting about it, praising or abusing it, is probably entering where angels would fear to tread. But the critic has to take that risk.

I remember that when Yeats was compiling his anthology of modern verse, and reading the work of young writers whose names he had never heard before, he told me one day, in an entranced monologue, of his adventure in discovering the poetry of W. J. Turner. He waved his hands in the air, and lifted up his voice, like a priest before the altar. There could be no doubt that he was deeply moved and excited. He spoke of the sculptor, the marmoreal philosopher, which he had found in Turner. My own enthusiasm, of some years' standing, responded, and I found myself enlarging upon what I believed to be the central motive, the life-urge, of Turner's poetry. Looking through this selection of verses now, I find that belief confirmed.

Technically, Turner is a careless poet. His fervour, and the odd screwed-up nervous intensity of his moments of insight, will not let him rest in verbal comforts. He is thus more like Shelley than like Keats (the two extremes in this matter). He gluts lines for no purpose; and one cannot feel always a confidence in his variations of rhythm. Indeed, I suspect that they are the result of sheer indifference on his part. He does not care. He is a rhapsodist, and his accompanying music is often a rough strumming of the strings of his guitar (technique). It could not have been for this that Yeats praised him so lavishly. Nor would I do so. I love the exhibition of skill and care in verse.

But the true poet in Turner rides above this weakness. I should say that his technique is part of the man's character, the man more familiar in the music critic. The poet stands behind that; a strange, solitary figure, listening. That must be the person Yeats saw: a creature in exile, doomed to live in a hemisphere remote from the one in which he was born.

This book reveals his preoccupation with that silence. He refers to it, invokes it, worships it, again and again.

> Through that still wood I ride,
> Hearing the silence-song. . . .

And in a poem of his youth he looks on some boys bathing.

> All of them were hearkening as to singing
> Of far-off voices thin and delicate,
> Voices too fine for any mortal wind
> To blow into the whorls of mortal ears. . . .

Silence is for Mr. Turner the great and final positive, as water was to Thales, and fire to Heraclitus. It is an agent which reduces human argument and strife. He sees it in moonlight which sucks the colour out of a fruitladen tree.

> And white and still that robber lay
> On the frail boughs asleep,
> Eating the solid substance through
> In silence clear and deep.

He recognises it at the very moment when, as a man, he has been busy with his principle human preoccupation, music.

> When the last note is played and void the hall,
> I sometimes think that then music begins. . . .
> On the live ear no sounds of music fall,
> The organ sleeps, coiled in its branching wood.
> But this deep soundlessness is music's food.

Note that careless, lazy inversion in "void the hall." It is typical of the man. Note also that last line. What is music's food is also the food of Turner the poet; the creature to whom Yeats paid homage, and to whom I also dare to pay homage, in the belief that his work is permanent. RICHARD CHURCH

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This is My Country. By STOYAN CHRISTOWE. *Robert Hale.* 12s. 6d.
One Way of Living. By JAMES BRIDIE. *Constable.* 8s. 6d.
Round the Room. By EDWARD KNOBLOCK. *Chapman and Hall.* 12s. 6d.

Probably the success of an autobiography depends very largely upon the frame of mind in which it is written. If an author really wants to tell the story of his life he is more likely to make a good job of it than if he regards it merely as a lucrative holiday task, releasing him from creative work. Howard Spring and Stoyan Christowe obviously felt impelled to write their books, and in communicating that impulse they have made them thoroughly alive and readable. In Mr. Bridie's the impulse is lacking, and I do not mind betting that he did not want to write it at all and only did so finally in response to the solicitations of his publisher. Mr. Knoblock appears to have written his autobiography because he has reached the stage of life at which it is customary to do so.

Heaven Lies About Us is a very short and moving account of the author's boyhood in a Cardiff slum. He was one of a family of nine, living on the precarious earnings of his father, a jobbing

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gardener. He left school at the age of twelve, to start on the succession of jobs—errand-boy, office-boy, messenger-boy in a newspaper office—that led eventually to his present august position as selector-in-chief of choices for the library lists of readers of the *Evening Standard*. As the title suggests, Mr. Spring's memories are suffused with the glow of romanticism, and this quality, although it adds charm to his description of the "heaven" which his acute imagination enabled him to extract from sordid surroundings, is a fault. There are some things that should not be romanticised and the sort of childhood Mr. Spring led is one of them. For him it is all very well; he has escaped from poverty, and can regard it in unruffled retrospect. But the slums of Cardiff remain, and they afford matter for indignation rather than nostalgia.

Mr. Christowe also had a hard upbringing. His book begins with a lively description of a village in Bulgarian Macedonia set a-buzzing by returned emigrés with fabulous stories about a brave new world. The older inhabitants are inclined to be incredulous, but the boys and young men are fired with ambition, become discontented with their primitive existence, and think of America as an Eldorado. Little Stoyan dreamed of nothing else, and in face of his father's disapproval he emigrated when he was thirteen. Thereafter his story is an account of how he painfully succeeded, not only in "making good," but in de-Balkanising himself to such an extent that when, after the last war, he returned to Bulgaria, he felt like a stranger and knew that he was at last what he had always wished to become—a one hundred per cent. American. Mr. Christowe's theme is topical, his descriptive powers compelling, his observation shrewd, and his moral cheering. Altogether I recommend *This is My Country* to anyone in search of a book that will help him to forget the war without forgetting the existence of the contemporary world.

One Way of Living is an unsatisfactory book. To conceal what I take to be his diffidence, Mr. Bridie has adopted certain devices; the chief of them is his style, in which determination to be bright and amusing is more consistently apparent than successful. At times the writing has all the breathlessness of a debutante's diary.

I asked them if they would like a play about Burke and Hare, and they said yes. So I went home and wrote one. I felt very guilty about the Scottish National Theatre Society, so I wrote them a play too. . . . It was about a girl who fell in love with a postman and I laughed myself sick when I was writing it.

Mr. Bridie traces his career from infancy, through school, university, hospital, army and stage, in ten sections covering five years each. Most of these sections are decorated at either end with italicised irrelevancies which might have justified their inclusion if they had been witty. The book has further padding in the shape of innumerable anecdotes, and there is also an essay on woman, over which, I am sure, Mr. Bridie laughed himself sick.

Mr. Knoblock, who is remembered as the author of *Kismet* and part author of *Milestones*, follows his own fortunes, and those of his numerous plays, at considerable length; he recollects kindly the people he has met, and commits anecdotes rather less frequently than Mr. Bridie. *Round the Room* is tepid entertainment.

Geoffrey Parsons

CALLING FOR A SPADE

Calling For a Spade. By Richard Church. *Dent.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Church has, or had, a cottage in Essex. This book is the story, in the form of a series of essays, of how he discovered it, renovated it, made it into a small paradise, and then abandoned it. The cottage was primilarly a medium of escape: escape from the immediate mechanised hell of London, from the potential hell of the bomber, from the innumerable maggots of civilisation that gnaw into the mind of the writer who needs quiet for his work. For six years Mr. Church did the things that so many of his fellow writers have found pleasure in doing: hacked a garden out of a wilderness, re-thatched his roof, dug a well, civilised the plumbing, explored the surrounding countryside, made the almost hopeless attempt—six years being the minimum of time for preparation—to make some impression of friendship on the cast-iron of the local community. Having done all this, and having had a good deal of fun in doing it, he finally found himself driven from the quiet flat-lands of Essex by the very thing which had driven him to them: the modern war-plane. His handful of Essex earth, by this time typical for him of all the traditional beauty of the English landscape, had become the centre of a government aerodrome. It is significant that the last of Miss Joan Hassell's neat, friendly illustrations to the book should be of Mr. Church's second cottage, now too abandoned, with the shadow of the bomber lying across its roof also.

As an essayist Mr. Church works with the distinction and method to be expected from a poet of his class: reflectively, with tender exploration. There is nothing aggressive about him; he paints with an easy, dreamy brush, and succeeds in getting on to his page some of that clear cloud-bright light that hangs over the Essex distances. He has obviously been fascinated by the wind-driven solitude of East Anglia, but now he confesses that he has "never been able to shake off a sense of loneliness, of being cut off from the *main* world of London and all the universe south and west of London," and asks "What is this instinct in the whole human race which makes us all look westward with a 'wild surmise,' and eastward with melancholy and nostalgia?" This sense of nostalgia and insecurity, the idea of his being only a migrant fleeing to Essex on Friday evening and back to the London flat on Monday morning, is present all through these essays. It gives them a quality of nervous delicacy. They are very brief, as if London and the outer world and the coming aerodrome never gave him time for elaboration. And when the aerodrome finally drives him away, and, incidentally, westward, he shows unconscious relief. He is glad to be escaping towards the sun, out of reach of the devastating east winds, into the richer, kindlier country in which, by a happy coincidence, these lines are being written.

That change should, I think, be a good one. Sheltered between the North and South Downs he will find that the blood will be warmer, his nostalgia translated to excitement. In an essay called *Westward Ho!* he says of East Anglian folk: "I believe their characteristics must have something to do with the personality of the eastern soil." That personality has found its way into this book. These sparse, softly coloured little essays are in the tradition of Cotman, and I can think of no way of praising them more aptly. If the south country can produce a richer inspiration, so much the better for Mr. Church and us.

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Autumn 1939

Selected List of Forthcoming Books

A decrease in the number of books due for publication this Autumn was inevitable, and it is reflected in this list which is shorter than usual. But the decrease is much less serious than seemed likely six weeks ago. Some publishers indeed have resolved to continue their entire programme regardless of the war, and there are few cases of very drastic reductions. The quality of the books announced promises well, and it can reasonably be hoped that the response of the reading public will justify the courage shown by the publishers. There is even a pleasing possibility that the war, by placing difficulties in the way of more gregarious occupations, may increase the popularity of reading.

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Here Lies. By DOROTHY PARKER. *Longmans.* 7s. 6d.

In these days, when those who read books have no time to waste on reviews, it is more than ever desirable for a novel to bear on its face some clue to the nature of its body. Non-fiction obligingly labels itself, and whether a writer be Left, Right, National, Scientific or even Mystical there is a suitable organisation to register his book, assess its merits and dispose of it in thousands at half the published price before the unlucky reviewer has received his unsaleable copy. Why should not fiction acquire the same privilege, and advertise on its jacket its own predominant flavour? Who would not gladly be warned which were the Sombre, the Sensitive, the Sordid novels of the month, or hasten to purchase the Spring Selection of the Sexy Book Society?

Were such a scheme in operation, *Rejected Guest* would win the cypress for the embittered novel of the season. Its hero is a war bastard who spends a dreary youth in the home of a provincial rent-collector, and graduates to a still drearier adolescence as a London biological student. By one of those miracles common in magazines but surprising in Mr. Aldington, he is adopted by his wealthy grandfather in a fit of senile benevolence, and dismissed with a thousand a year to a rather babylonian resort on the French Riviera. Here, he falls in love, is let down, finds his gold turn first to dross and then to air, and is shipped back penniless to London to wait for the present war. The moral of the story is that most men are enemies and the rest unbenevolent neutrals. This is the plot; but the hero is so dim, and the asides attacking his persecutors so vicious, that it becomes obvious that Mr. Aldington cares little for the story, and has merely used it as a spout to let the venom of his mind run out. Unhappily, he chooses to batter such poor old dummies, already knocked silly by the funny columns of the penny press, that even his slickest epigrams fall a little flat. He has hits at comic-strip communists, foreigners, university highbrows, and, most of all, at "the crapulous young intellectual, who recognises no law but his own convenience, no code of manners but his own lack of them, no aspirations but 'the revolution' which is to set him free from the tedious necessity of earning a living," etc., etc. This, continually repeated, is bad enough; but it is difficult to understand how a writer of Mr. Aldington's sensibility can descend to such lumbering vulgarities as "Who can argue against such subtle class distinctions, against the mysterious instincts of finer natures? After all, where is the sanitary man who would wish his son to marry Jimmie Douglas's daughter?" The trouble with Mr. Aldington is that he is more than a little old-fashioned. His world, in which youth pores passionately over Shelley and the illustrated science magazines to learn the secrets of love and life, and people sleep with each other less as a pleasure than as a political demonstration, is reminiscent more of early Wells than of late Priestley, and smells pre-1914 rather than pre-1939. *Rejected Guest* is clever, witty, astringently entertaining, and reads far better than most novels in the flood of contemporary taste. But it is, nevertheless, as flat as only old satire can be, for Mr. Aldington is merely rescourging the age that he and others chronicled twenty years ago. Then he was, in some degree, making literary history; now he is only writing it.

Mr. di Donato is rightly described as a "powerful" writer, for he lets fly at you with everything he has, and if he never aims at the head, he lands frequently in the stomach and sometimes on the heart. *Christ in Concrete* is a lament for Italian building labourers caught in the whirlpool of American business, and has many qualities of a genuine epic. The author, with the aid of such usually tiresome tricks as recurrent epithets and the omission of the definite article, has caught the desperate tempo of high-pressure hustle; and the dreadful dooms that overtake one builder after another have an almost tragic inevitability. Although the characters have little individuality they are convincing as a group, and chatter about their religious beliefs and sexual organs with the poetry of a Synge and the enthusiasm of a Trobriand Islander. Unfortunately, though the pastoral is good, the tragedy is very much overdone; and the author compels us to sup on horrors in every course instead of reserving them for a savoury. The technique is invariably the same. Mr. di Donato, like a Roman sadist inviting doomed gladiators to dinner so as to enjoy their subsequent deaths the better, introduces us to an intended victim, tells us just enough about him to arouse our sympathy, edges him towards destruction, pushes him over, bids us mark the "meaty quash" as he strikes the ground, and then takes us down for a detailed look at the body:

> His fingers slithered about grisly sharp bones and in a gluey, stringy, hollow mass, yielding as wet macaroni. Grey light brought sight, and hysteria punctured his heart. A girder lay across his chest, his right hand clutched a grotesque human mask, and suspended almost on top of him was the twitching, faceless body of Tomas. His fingers loosened and the bodiless, headless face dropped and fitted to the side of his face while the drippings above came slower and slower.

Mr. di Donato is very imaginative. Such phrases as "blood vessels burst like mashed flower stems" come easily to him, and he has many passages as fine as that in which a man, slowly drowning in liquid cement, breaks off his teeth and lower jaw in his efforts to bite his way free. *Christ in Concrete* is an unusual book and contains some effective writing, but it is too obviously intended for a certain sort of public. Have it bound uniformly with your Mirbeau and your Antonio Gallonio.

Gus and Ida and *To Town* are "proletarian" novels. Their characters belong to those suburbs of civilisation where newspapers and flush lavatories are the only obvious signs of culture and science, and spend most of their limited and unremarkable existences in one or other of the three great verities—birth, copulation and death. Both books are very fair specimens of their kind. Mr. Halward is the better writer and succeeds in reproducing a dialogue that is inarticulate without being stilted. Mr. Swingler is clumsier and more pretentious, but he has touch of fantasy that his rival lacks, and gives his fish and chips a faint flavour of *Brighton Rock*. Both writers are at pains to be good reporters, and minutely mass-observe the boring repetitions of front-parlour courting and back-street quarrelling. The only possible justification for either of them is naïvely offered by Mr. Halward's publishers: "Theirs is not, perhaps, a very unusual or dramatic story; but Gus and Ida were not very unusual or dramatic people." In other words:

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SWEENEY: "Birth, and copulation, and death
That's all, that's all, that's all, that's all,
Birth and copulation and death."
DORIS: "I'd be bored."

I agree with Doris.

Miss Dorothy Parker needs no recommendation. *Here Lies* is a collected edition of her short stories, and contains most of those included in *Laments For the Living* and *After Such Pleasures*, as well as a few published only in periodicals. Viewing her work *en masse* one has a clearer view of Miss Parker's distinctive quality. Her most obvious talent, one that has brought her popularity, is an ability to take the most commonplace scenes and characters and embellish them with a wit that is always discreet and a verisimilitude that is never a bore. It is difficult to think of any other woman writer with a similar humorous detachment—Jane Austen is the only name that comes to mind. Although she has what is usually termed a "masculine" intelligence, Miss Parker writes from a pleasingly feminine point of view. She is far harder on female than on male stupidities, and is the surest guide I know through the inferno of the feminine middle-class. Miss Parker is still a limited writer, and it is ominous that the only stories in which she fails are those (one about the Spanish war and another about a blind Negro boy) where she deserts her familiar ingredients. Nevertheless, she stands in a class by herself, both as a master of the satirical short story and as a woman writer who is not self-conscious about her sex. She is one of the first literary fruits of female emancipation.

JOHN MAIR

THE MIDDLE AGES

Mohammed and Charlemagne. By HENRI PIRENNE. Translated by BERNARD MIALL. *Allen and Unwin.* 10s. 6d.

This is the last work of the illustrious author of *A History of Europe*, and possibly the most important. Dealing, as it does deal, with a subject which he had studied during more than thirty years, and on which his views were original and almost revolutionary, it will provoke controversy, but it will—*mirabile dictu*—increase one's admiration of the man.

It is not as he would have left it had he lived. It was his habit to write his books twice over; the first time in rough and abbreviated form, the second with attention to style and finish. This work, therefore, came to his son as a collection of notes, the sentences being sometimes without verbs, and their relations to what followed demanding a certain measure of divining power. The references—and they were as numerous as one might expect from Pirenne's enormous reading—were indicated in a kind of shorthand. Accordingly, M. Jacques Pirenne entrusted the task of editing the work to one of his father's most distinguished pupils, Professor Vercauteren of the Colonial University in Antwerp. That task the Professor has most ably and conscientiously performed. He has not, of course, endeavoured to remove the roughnesses. The book is still a series of almost physical jerks; but retains the essence of Pirenne's ideas, the facts on which those ideas are based, and the tone, which, after a few pages have been read, puts on a strange attraction.

The first point on which Pirenne insists is that the Roman Empire was really based on the Mediterranean—no "estranging" sea, but a means of union. And this unity remained, practically unimpaired, in spite of the Teutonic invasions. Except in Britain, which was occupied by Germans who had never come under

Roman influence, the old "Romania" still existed; the "invaders" had in some cases been invited into the Empire, they were soon absorbed by it, and they asked nothing better. The battle of Hadrianople, so constantly represented as the decisive victory of a foreign power, was really an incident in a civil war—Roman against Roman. It is true that new States were formed, but in these States there are scanty signs of Germanism—a few laws, a few relics in country districts. In the towns the Bishops, wearing (as they still do) their Roman garb, acted as Roman officials. The Merovingian court forgot its old language, and spoke and wrote a remarkably idiomatic Latin. One King indeed was a Latin poet. A Theodoric boasted of his title of Patrician—the glory he gained as "Dietrich of Bern" did not come to him till much later. His daughter Amalasuntha was Roman in all but name; and his son-in-law was a student of Plato.

Things could hardly have been otherwise, for the Germans were few in number, they were penetrated with the greatness of Rome, and were half Romans before they entered the Empire. Hence the ease with which Belisarius and Narses restored the authority of Justinian, and made the Mediterranean again what it was felt it should never have ceased to be—a Roman lake—a bridge between Ostia and Carthage. In a word, "Roma capta ferum victorem cepit," and imposed its arts upon the rustic Teuton.

Altogether different was the Mohammedan portent—a real conquest and a total revolution. In comparison with Amrou and Musa, Genseric was a mere raider; the armies of Islam permanently took away what had been almost as integral a part of the Empire as Constantinople itself, wresting from it such suburbs of Rome as Antioch, Alexandria, and Carthage. Still more, it subjected the Church—the new conquerors were not Arians like Theodoric nor Catholics like Clovis. Finally, the conquest of Spain made the Western Mediterranean no longer a Roman lake, but a pathway for Moslem sailors.

This, and not the Gothic or Hunnish wars, was the true "Decline and Fall." In consequence of it the axis of life was shifted northwards: the Merovingian dynasty, as an indirect result, rotted away, and was succeeded by the Carolingian, which, in Professor Pirenne's view, has received from scholars much of the praise actually due to its predecessor. Through the economic depression caused by the severance of the better half of the Empire, the new Rome, established in showy grandeur by Charles the Great, rapidly sank into serfdom to the Church and the feudality. The "Middle Ages" began, the tradition of antiquity vanished, new elements came to the surface; and the great change was marked by the coronation of Charles and the breach with the ancient Empire. Miraculously surviving for six and a half centuries, Eastern Rome was bound to fall in the long run.

I have said enough to justify my belief that the book will arouse controversy; but the wealth of material on which these opinions are based can be appreciated only by a study of the work itself. Mr. Miall's translation is clear and easy; but I could wish he had given us the ordinary English names—Hadrianople or Adrianople, for instance, instead of Adrinople. In one place, if I am not mistaken, he writes Claudius for Claudian; and on p. 102, as if he were a modern detective novelist, he perpetrates the terrible "a merchant *whom* I am inclined to believe was the owner of shops"—a Shakespearean solecism which, despite that high authority, it is as well not to imitate. E. E. KELLETT

CASTLES

Castles. By SIDNEY TOY. *Heinemann.* 25*s.*

The subtitle *A Short History of Fortifications from* 1600 B.C. *to* A.D. 1600 makes such an extravagant claim that it tempts a reviewer to be nasty, especially one whose competence begins where the author's finishes. For it is clear that Mr. Toy would have done better to limit his book to the Middle Ages in England and France.

The first chapter is grandly entitled "The ancient fortresses of Babylon, Mesopotamia, Assyria, Asia Minor and Greece" (and there is also an unmentioned page on Egypt). Why Babylon and Assyria should be distinguished from Mesopotamia can only be surmised after reading the chapter; it seems as though these were headings of notes, made from time to time and assembled without co-ordination. The Babylon heading covers two exiguous sentences; but a couple of paragraphs in the Assyria section are also devoted to the town as remodelled by the last Babylonian

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emperors, who would have hated to be called Assyrians. The section entitled "Mesopotamia" merely says: "Their country being flat, the Mesopotamians always built on the plain, and their walls, consisting of a rampart 26ft. high, built of mudbrick, and surmounted by a wall, built of burnt brick and bitumen, were defended by a moat or canal, or river." But Mesopotamia does not consist entirely of plain, and its inhabitants did not always build on the flat (if I may be allowed to invert the wording); they did not invariably put a burnt-brick wall on top of a mudbrick one (at Eridu they even used stone below), the height varies, and it was not always possible to enclose the fortifications with water.

Next come slightly misleading descriptions of Mycenae and Tiryns, with obsolete plans, one of which omits a gate while the other shows a gate which did not exist. Next Troy, with no mention of the early Bronze Age citadel, and only a scrap about the "sixth city," which is no longer to be identified with the "Mycenaean settlement" of the famous siege. In "Cities of the Hittites," there is no mention of the capital, where the fortifications are in good enough condition to be restored, but there is a little said about three sites "in various parts of Asia Minor," two of which I should prefer to call Syrian, and where few Hittites lived. In Egypt some of the real fortresses are dismissed as being of "purely military character," while temple enclosures are briefly described, and there are illustrations of a king's fancy château, with a gateway imitated from a Syrian type of residence. A bundle of jottings headed "Assyria" deals mostly with quite other peoples. The description of Athens starts with a series of errors. A restoration of Rhodes, constructed by the author from an ancient description, is a sporting effort and must be approximately accurate in plan, but the elevation is most questionable. The Greek text merely says there were vaults below the wall-walk, it does not indicate their shape nor state the level on which they stood or to which they rose. There is no justification for drawing a parallel to the walls of Rome six centuries later, with a line of tall round-headed arches like a railway viaduct in London. A more plausible German restoration suggests two storeys of arched rooms from which engines shot through slits in the wall. But it is as likely as not that the roofs were corbelled out to a point—"scissors" is the literal meaning of the word for "vault," and there is no Greek example of round arches being used above ground till long after the foundation of Rhodes in 408 B.C.

The twenty-five pages on the later Greek and Roman periods assemble a great deal of valuable information derived from ancient authors, but make too few allusions to existing fortifications; no more Greek examples are even mentioned, although plenty survive. The chapter on Byzantine fortifications before the Crusades ignores a great deal of recent investigation, and dates the moat of Constantinople five hundred years too early.

On reaching the Middle Ages Mr. Toy is more familiar with his material, especially in England and France. His descriptions are clear and accurate, and they are illustrated by a fine and welcome series of his own photographs, plans and drawings; these are, with few exceptions, perfectly easy to follow. On other countries he is not so adequate. Except for a poor description and obsolete plan of Crac des Chevaliers, without reference to the exhaustive French study of it published a few years ago, he omits the great castles of Syria and Palestine—thus practically ignoring the Crusades. South Italy receives one short paragraph, while the general peculiarities of German castles pass unnoticed. These omissions are in keeping with his lack of emphasis on the principle of defending a wall from overhanging rows of machicoulis—a fourteenth-century notion which revolutionised the science of defence, making it possible to ignore refinement of planning, and to bring up to date the most antiquated structures simply by adding a new top. On early medieval castles, where the plan is all-important, the author's observation is sound and comprehensive, and that section of the book forms a worthy history of the subject such as few could write. It is also a useful guide to carry when touring.

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EUROPEAN CIVILISATION

The Rise of European Civilisation. By CHARLES SEIGNOBOS. Translated from the French by CATHERINE ALISON PHILIPS. *Cape.* 18s.

Professor Seignobos is a distinguished French historian, 83 years of age. The publisher of this English translation of his latest work describes it as "a comparative study of the growth of European civilisation from the earliest times to the present day" and "a magnificent synthesis of social, political and economic life." It is the kind of book which is popular among writers, particularly American, at the present time and must have attractions for the historian towards the end of his career. It attempts a bird's-eye view of the whole of European history, the thread which is to guide us through the labyrinth, and so to lead us to the promised land of "synthesis," being the blessed word civilisation. Unfortunately, in nine cases out of ten, after a few pages the thread disappears and we are left in the labyrinth of a "comparative study"; we stumble along from fact to fact up and down the cold, dank, bloodstained corridors of history; the synthesis evades the writer and the reader and on the last page, after a rather perfunctory summary or conclusion, we are left rather dazed and muddled facing the Minotaur of modern "-isms" as the last word in the rise of European civilisation.

Professor Seignobos's book is not an exception to this depressing rule. The reason why it and so many similar works fail to achieve their object and live up to the publisher's description, is that the method adopted makes failure all but inevitable. The author gives in chronological order a description of the chief political, social, economic, religious, and military events in the several periods. That is not a synthesis; it is not even "a comparative study"; it is certainly not an explanation of the rise of European civilisation; it is merely a text-book of European history. Professor Seignobos has indeed produced quite an admirable text-book, but that, we understand, was not his intention. He intended to describe European civilisation and to show how and why it has arisen. But he cannot do that by giving us a chronological account of European history, in which the relevance of 80 per cent. of the facts is not indicated. To achieve his object it would have been necessary to analyse civilisation and then to show us how the different strands of which it is composed were woven into it by historical events.

An example may be given which will explain this criticism. One of the ingredients of civilisation is usually considered to be humanitarianism, in its widest sense. It is itself a complex ingredient, for it includes a code of conduct and manners in which civilisation substitutes gentleness, courtesy, and kindliness, for violence, dominance, cruelty, and brutality. Several strands went to

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the making of this particular phenomenon in European civilisation. If this book were really a synthesis, it would explain to the reader the nature of this humanitarianism and show him how it had developed. But it does not do so. In the chapter on the Middle Ages there is a section on courtesy which explains the growth of gallantry. It points out that gallantry produced a modification in the attitude of men to women, and that this "is the most enduring legacy bequeathed by the nobility of the Middle Ages." Again in the chapter on the Eighteenth Century there is a short reference to Rousseau and the growth of the specific humanitarianism of the time. But there is no attempt to relate the two or to indicate their relative importance in the "rise of European civilisation." They are left as isolated events in the history of Europe.

LEONARD WOOLF

Nazi Germany Can't Win. By DR. WILHELM NECKER. *Lindsay Drummond.* 10s. 6d.

This is not a particularly original book—it doesn't pretend to be. The conclusions which it draws are already pretty familiar: lack of materials and proper preparation make a long war impossible for Hitler. What Dr. Necker does is to bring together the factual evidence on which these conclusions have been based. His sources are exclusively German, the speeches and lectures of politicians and soldiers, and articles from the industrial and military technical journals. There emerges the picture of a Germany which has been steadily and exclusively transferring itself on to a war basis for the last seven years. Nothing that has been done there, even down to the scheme for a People's Car or the Strength through Joy movement, has had any other purpose.

But the preparations are far from complete. Not only the Balkans but the Baltic as well (this is specially interesting in view of recent developments) would have had to be economic dependencies before Germany's raw materials supply was assured. This is an important factor in Dr. Necker's list of "Fatal Weaknesses," which, with its excellent documentation, is very impressive. Germany's transport system he shows to be particularly weak, the rolling stock worn out and a deficiency of locomotives which he puts at 5,000; while Hitler's personal treasure, the motor roads, are considered by his army experts to be quite inadequate substitutes. A long war being impossible, and the hopes of a *Blitzkrieg* illusory, Dr. Necker gives a fascinating analysis of the various tactical possibilities. This section will be invaluable to the amateur strategist, a role which most of us adopt in wartime.

"We cannot hope to build a better world without improving the individual. Towards this end each of us must work toward his own highest development, accepting at the same time his share of responsibility in the general life of humanity—*our particular duty being to help those to whom we feel we can be most useful.*"

EVE CURIE in "Madame Curie."

THESE noble words—penned in writing the life of a noble woman, whose scientific researches helped to inaugurate a new epoch in medical history—strike home to us all. It is the duty of each one of us to contribute *something* to the common weal, and, where possible, to mitigate suffering and distress. By sending a contribution to the Royal Cancer Hospital, and thus helping the fight against one of humanity's greatest scourges, *you* can adequately discharge both these obligations to your fellow men. Please send your gift to the Treasurer.

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Old-fashioned Flowers. By SACHEVERELL SITWELL. Illustrated by JOHN FARLEIGH. *Country Life.* 15s.

Mr. Sitwell, as befits the son of an expert in the art of garden-making, is a flower-lover of the highest sensibility. Some might even charge him with preciosity, but those whose tastes coincide with his will find much delight and instruction in these pages devoted principally to the Auricula, the Pink, the Primrose, the Tulip, the Old Roses, and the Fuchsia. His attitude towards these old-fashionable flowers of our gardens is best expressed in a phrase of his own: "It is our contention that in the florist's flowers of a hundred years ago there is evidence of date and style." What he esteems, in fact, is "period value"; neatness, design, even artificiality; a certain sophistication and deliberation of the grower's art. Wildness and exuberance are not for him—he even goes so far as almost to deplore what he calls "the invasion of the British Isles by the flora of America, South Africa, and more particularly the Far East"—and the resultant effect on his taste is a curious combination between Victorian quaintness and Jacobean stylisation. The only modern improvement of which he seems to approve is the work recently done on the Iris, and here again he is perfectly consistent, since the natural formality of the Iris is precisely of the kind to satisfy his demands.

It is difficult to review this book in a short space; one would like to have three thousand words to express the feelings of exasperation and fascination with which it alternately inspires one. But even in so limited a space mention must be made of an enchanting passage dealing with the occupation and writings of one Shirley Hibberd, whose *Rustic Adornments for Homes of Taste* was published in 1856. This passage is really the *bonne-bouche* of the book, since Mr. Hibberd was evidently made for Mr. Sitwell and Mr. Sitwell for Mr. Hibberd. One wishes that Mr. Sitwell could be induced to write a complete biography of this absurd and delightful personage, experimentalist and vegetarian; or, if he is not prepared to do this himself, that he should at least encourage Mrs. Woolf to add an essay on the subject to her *Lives of the Obscure.*

Under London. By F. L. STEVENS. *Dent.* 8s. 6d.

A readable account of the "guts" of a big city, that complicated variety of pipes and wires which we all command when we use a switch, a tap or a plug. As he is conducted along the sewers, the tubes, the canals, tunnels and vaults, Mr. Stevens throws a number of interesting sidelights on the social history of London; that famous sewer, the Fleet, for instance, was once, along with Stamford Brook, Shoreditch, Clarke's cell and many others, an open river in an open town "and after this manner," he quotes from John Stow's Survey of London, 1598 "was this city then served with sweet and fresh waters which being since decayed, other means have been sought to supply the want." They are now all part of the drainage system and "the story of the covering in of these streams is, in fact, the history of London during the last four centuries."

[We regret that in our issue of September 30th the price of *The Road is Wider than Long*, by Roland Penrose, was given as 2s. 6d. This should have been 4s. 6d.]

BOOKS TO COME

An exceptionally interesting autobiography—*Westering*, by Rowland Kenney—is announced by Dent for October 26th. Many of those who read *A Pedlar's Pack* with its sincere and convincing portraits of navvies, tramps, dockers and other workers have long wished to know more of the singularly human and perceptive Foreign Office official who was its author. Here Mr. Kenney tells the story of his life from his childhood employment as a newspaper seller through the period of his Left Wing activities which included editorship of the original *Daily Herald* and his missions abroad for the Foreign Office, to his present day service in Whitehall. Dent publishes on the same day the latest volume of Y. Y.'s essays—*Searchlights and Nightingales*.

After Mrs. Villiers's portrait of Lady Bessborough in *The Grand Whiggery* comes *A Regency Chapter: Lady Bessborough in Love and Friendship*, by Miss Ethel Colburn Mayne. Lady Bessborough's relationship with Granville is the principal subject of this new study by a distinguished interpreter of the Regency period. It will be published by Macmillan on October 31st.

The Bodley Head announces the collected poems of Christopher Caudwell for October 26th. On the same day they publish another version of *Chin P'ing Mei*, with an introduction by Arthur Waley, and *The Film Answers Back*, by E. W. and M. M. Robson, an historical appreciation of the cinema. As an indication of the relationship between the film and basic national cultures, a large number of representative films of every nation is described. The authors' argument (highly controversial) is that public taste has impelled film producers to make pictures upon a steadily rising standard of quality and cultural value.

From the Nonesuch Press on November 2nd comes a selection from the works of Pushkin—poems, prose and plays. It is edited by Avrahm Yarmolinsky, of the New York Public Library, who contributes an introduction. The selection contains a new verse translation of *Eugen Onegin*, by Babette Deutsch, other narrative poems, the lyrics and ballads, *Boris Godunov* and prose tales such as *The Queen of Spades* and *The Captain's Daughter*.

Duckworth announces for early November a collection of drawings by Soglow. The American edition has had to be considerably bowdlerised for publication in England since Soglow seems to have treated Royalty

"Tomorrow"

A Journal For the World Citizen of the New Age

The New 6D. Weekly

No. 1 OUT NEXT FRIDAY

"Tomorrow" believes

That this war marks the end of an economic epoch. That the economy of Tomorrow must incorporate man's major activities—social, artistic, religious, scientific. That *true* democracy must be upheld at all cost and that all Dictatorships, whether of the "right" or of the "left" are dangerous and archaic. That science, art and religion must be re-orientated and established as the unity which indeed they are. "Tomorrow" is at once a commentary, a magazine—and a portend. It is entirely non-political and independent. It is cosmopolitan in its aims. The first number contains articles by Englishmen, a Frenchman, an American and an Austrian domiciled in England.

JULES SAUERWEIN (of *Paris-Soir*), G. S. Francis, Dr. Eugen Kolisko, Havergal Brian and others.

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"Tomorrow"

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W. M. Thackeray, "THE VIRGINIANS"

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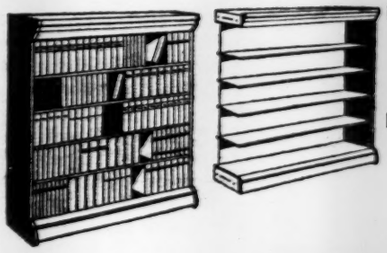

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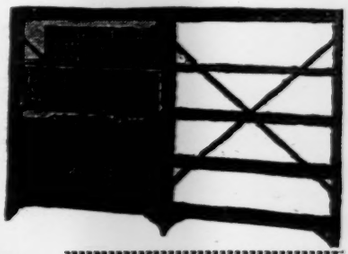

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with insufficient respect. However, to make up for that, there are a number of new highly topical drawings of which one shows Mr. Chamberlain chasing Hitler with an umbrella.

Herbert Jenkins state that the war has produced a renewed demand for Bernard Newman's *Peddling Poland*, which is an intimate account of Polish life and customs. A new book by Mr. Newman, *Baltic Roundabout*, comes from this firm on November 3rd. It is the result of a tour carried out by the author and his bicycle, George, through Denmark, Sweden, the Aaland Islands, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, East Prussia, Danzig and Germany.

The Real Rulers of Germany, by Hans Behrend, coming from Lawrence and Wishart on October 31st, is an analysis of the financial interests which helped Hitler to power. The author uses Nazi official figures to show how the middle classes, to whom Hitlerism originally appealed, have suffered under Nazidom and how the big financiers have benefited.

A book on *Parliament*, by Dr. W. Ivor Jennings, author of *Cabinet Government*, will be published by the Cambridge University Press on October 27th. It is a clear summary, supplementary to the earlier account, of the way Parliament actually works, with sections on Honourable Members, Parties, the technique of opposition and the processes of legislation.

Cape announces for October 27th a collection of H. E. Bates's *My Uncle Silas* stories illustrated from drawings by Edward Ardizzone.

From John Miles on November 3rd comes a book of gossip by Ian Coster, the film critic, in which Mr. Coster's many friends and acquaintances are shown in unfamiliar and sometimes disadvantageous lights.

The publisher of *Teamsman*, by Crichton Porteous, alluded to last week is Harrap.

Owing to a misprint, *Gus and Ida*, the first novel by Leslie Halward, author of *To Tea On Sunday*, was unfortunately attributed last week to Leslie Howard. MARIE SCOTT-JAMES

About Motoring

LIGHTWEIGHT MOTOR CYCLES

MOTORISTS are beginning to realise that as in 1914–1918 there is no guarantee and perhaps no probability that petrol rations will long remain available for persons who are not directly engaged upon military or defence service. If petrol becomes scarce, a monthly issue of two gallons will, of course, always be granted more readily than one of ten gallons. In other words, individuals will stand more chance of a ticket for motor cycle supplies than for motor car supplies. To the rural dweller, any issue is better than none, when the railway station is distant, and motor bus services are suspended or curtailed. The average citizen is prejudiced against motor cycles, but if he analyses his prejudice he will find that its grounds are not particularly substantial, and relate principally to the reckless use of motor cycles by harum-scarum youngsters, to the noise generated by semi-racing machines, and to the weight or starting exertions associated with high-powered machines. He should thus face the problem of his personal war transport with the recollection that it is not necessary to drive a motor cycle fast; and that many excellent motor cycles weigh very little, emit no objectionable degree of noise, and are childishly easy to start.

After the armistice of 1918 Sir Henry Norman contrived to create a wide demand amongst elderly and educated people for an absurd type of motor scooter, which appealed to retired colonels and similar owners of country cottages on small incomes because it was light, quiet, cheap, easily stored and economical of fuel. Unfortunately, it was also extremely uncomfortable and unstable; and the innovation died a natural death. But the market to-day offers a considerable range of featherweight motor cycles which possess all the advantages of the autoscooter, and are entirely free from its defects. For, say, eighteen guineas it is possible to buy what is called a "powercycle." This is to all intents a slightly fortified pedal cycle, equipped with a tiny engine of about 1 h.p. It may cover 150 miles on a gallon of pool petrol. It is quite comfortable to ride, not at all noisy, thoroughly well-braked, and has tyres which last for thousands of miles, and practically never puncture until they are nearly worn out. It can be ridden in ordinary clothing, as its speed does not demand thick protection of the body, whilst its oilier details are so placed and so screened that they do not foul the rider. It is as easy to ride as the pedal cycle which it so closely resembles. The engine is controlled by a single lever, the throttle—for both carburation and ignition are automatic. The sole remaining control additional to those of a pedal cycle is the clutch lever on the handlebar. Such machines are open-framed, like a ladies' pedal cycle, and are usually started in exactly the same fashion by throwing the right leg over the saddle, placing the right foot on a pedal just forward of its top position, and pedalling the light machine off till the engine fires. Their hill-climbing capacity is good enough to take a rider of ordinary weight up all normal main road hills without pedal assistance, and on specially severe gradients the engine can be momentarily assisted by pedalling. The engine will be a two-stroke, which is extraordinarily simple and reliable, for it is valveless and incorporates but two moving parts. This type of engine is apt to be a trifle stiff when new, but when it has been run in and found itself, it is an absolute glutton for work, and revels in its job. These engines are practically all made by a single large precision factory at Wolverhampton, which has for many years built them by the thousand and exported them to all parts of the world.

If the potential buyer be an experienced car owner, and has no objection to the more complicated controls involved by a gear box, he can increase his expenditure to £25 or even £45, and purchase a purely utility machine of greater horsepower, which will carry him faster on the flat, and take him up any hill in the British Isles. These latter will have normal dynamo lighting, and other luxuries, whereas the "powercycle" feeds its lamps from a small but perfectly reliable flywheel dynamo, which only generates current when the machine is actually in motion; light for parking purposes is furnished by a dry battery carried inside the head lamp. But even this latter equipment, modest though it be, provides all the illumination permitted by the police in time of war. The larger machines will normally average 100 miles or a little more on a gallon of fuel; but as petrol becomes increasingly difficult to obtain for private purposes, the rural resident may prefer a type which offers him 150 miles per gallon. The "powercycle" will cover 250-300 miles on the motor cycle ration of two gallons per month, and this is equivalent to ten miles per day.

Tax and insurance are in proportion to the low cost of all these machines, and offer a very substantial economy to motorists who must exist on fixed or reduced income in an era when living costs must inevitably rise quite steeply. R. E. DAVIDSON

Week-end Competitions

No. 506

Set by V. S. Pritchett

Competitors are invited to send in their own obituary notice. Length not to exceed 250 words. The usual prizes of Two Guineas and Half-a-guinea are offered.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, Oct. 27th.
2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.
3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.
4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 504

Set by Raymond Alderson

A first prize of Two Guineas and a second prize of Half a Guinea are offered for the best lyrical ode of not more than 20 lines to the balloon barrage.

Report by Raymond Alderson

Balloons are not conducive to good poetry. There was a considerable number of versifiers, but lyric odes came to them rather hardly, so that for the most part I was snowed under with broadsheets, giving tips on air defence. On perusing them I wondered if it wouldn't give a more satisfactory result to present the worst ode with the prize; or possibly the most lush; or the neatest. But though it rules out several competitors, the Convention must hold, and the winning poem must be, not the easiest on the eye, but the Best Ode.

Those competitors who had good ideas (Peter Caddy, Charles Furbank, Ruth Bethell) spoilt the balance by writing questionable verse, while those who wrote Poetry seemed to have more adjectives than ideas. A creamy richness of metaphor pervaded the majority; there is Alixandre's:

Fathomless, obscure and vast,
Watcher of generations past:

Shrouded, silver-seeded night;
Blazing, burnished, eyeless dome;
Steadfast planets, meteors bright;
Dying worlds, and worlds to come.

L. M. J.'s:

Sunkissed-galleons riding high
In the ocean of the sky.

and H. G. W. started well with:

O sky-dotting Dolphins shimmerings
Immobile silvery
Of concentric rings.

The balloons appear to be very near the heart of Londoners, and whether they are sausages, porpoises, elephants, or, in one case, angels' nightshirts, all seem sorry at the prospect of a balloonless sky when the war ends; there will doubtless be other consolations. Allen Laing's verse was splendid but too slick, "Snub sausage of silvery whiteness, That bobbeth about in the blue, Of tranquil and temperate tightness, That's almost too good to be true"; but it has a last line that puts it back in the category of *Punch* doggerel mongers. H. P. Blunt had a good last verse, From you, and from "Intelligence," We may observe once more How Blimps emerge to eminence When England is at war, but his ode was spoilt by its second, for I can still see no real connection between balloons and ants' eggs. There was a severe outbreak of moralists, all of whom left their safety unconditionally to the Blimps. (Blimp-limp, most popular rhyme.) John Gray's entry was original but hardly an ode, and the same applies to John Fay. Linnet's was apt, but hardly ever came out of its obscurity; L. V. Upwards' parody was good, but I waive it in favour of originals. No entry seemed entirely up to standard, so I propose to give a first prize of One Guinea and a second of Half a Guinea. The winner of the guinea, T. Wilson, has something gutty about his ode; he believes in the barrage, and after a severe tussle his Hopkinsian rampage gets the prize, which he must take with a pinch of salt, and I think that N. W.'s ode has again the right idea, though the verse cannot be ranked very high. Jill Waterhouse, Little Willie and Guy Innes were in at the last lap.

FIRST PRIZE

Mark ye the barrage defensive, kept by balloons over London—
Wonderful scheme for protecting lives of our passive resisters.
How can it be that a plaything—deeply beloved in our childhood,
Now grown Gargantuan, tremendous—changes from toy into weapon,
While from its form, which strains skyward, drift down a network of death-lines,
Destined to trap the unwary—the airman who schemes to plane earthward,
Discharging his murderous weapon at those who have done him no evil?
But as the spider entangles, craftily traps in her cobwebs,
Or as the wave-borne Medusa, floating upon the deep waters,
Yet with her tentacles widespread, brings death to victims of passage;
So these balloons soaring graceful, as cumulus clouds earth-attracted,
Keep watch and ward 'gainst the enemy, ready to lure him to downfall.
Nor do they work unassisted—long shafts of light gleaming heaven-ward,
Cutting the sky into sectors—up flash the searchlights to help them.
Sometimes obscuring the outlines, anon turning darkness to radiance;
Now chasing, now hiding the raiders, they drive them distraught to the barrage.
Instant come guns into action; swift fly the bright tracer bullets,
Followed by volleys of shrapnel; whilst all below in her "black-out"
London lies resolute, silent, all her vast hordes still unflinching
Trust her invincible barrage. Hail, our balloons, our defenders!

T. WILSON

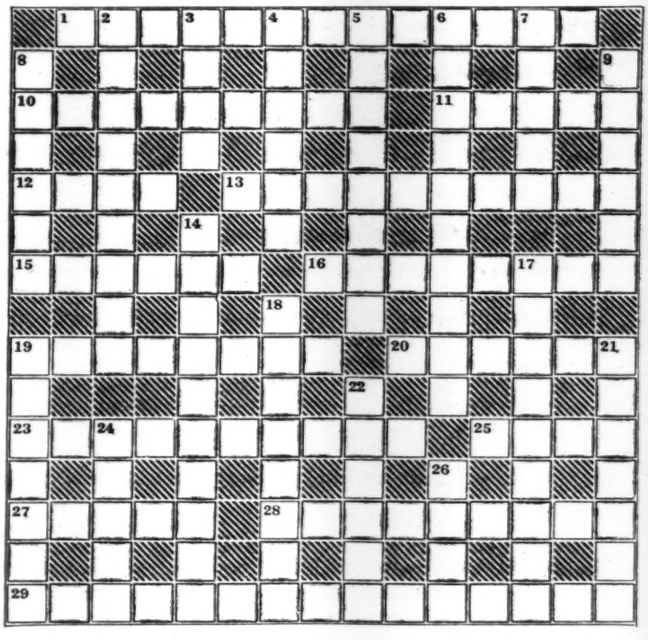
SECOND PRIZE

Animal, vegetable, mineral—
(Bird thou never wert)
But before I proceed to unload
This my ode,
How very much simplified would my task be
If I might ask thee
From this spot inaccessibly rural
Whether to address thee in the singular or the plural?
For to tell the truth I have only seen thee at secondhand, obliquely,
That is to say, in an illustrated weekly,
And frankly I don't quite gather—but enough:
For I must hail thee, perilous stuff,
(What thing of earth or air or sea?
What way floating?)
Hail thee and say that it is borne on me
How that in answer to an air-raid warning,
Striving towards Heaven in the pale light of morning
There to fulfil thy too fantastic duty,
Thou mightst appear indeed
A thing of beauty.

N. W.

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 502

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is
N. K. Stephen, Knowle Hotel, Sidmouth.

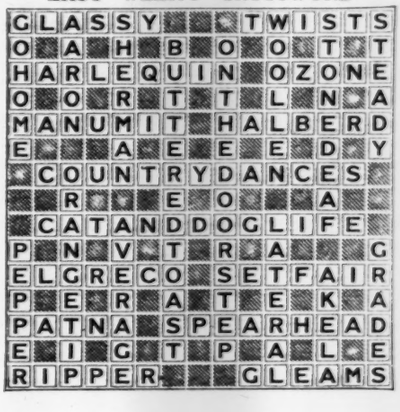
ACROSS

1. Ban on bolting one's midday meal? (13)
10. Puts the lid on insanity perhaps. (9)
11. Current in the Empire. (5)
12. Criterion of drunkenness. (4)
13. Such an one should have a big beating in the chest. (10)
15. They are floored at both ends. (6)
16. Such bases would blot out the Reds. (8)
19. One owes it to him. (8)
20. You can find traces of it. (6)
23. Wife of the Pilgrim. (10)
25. A rag would be out of place in this city. (4)
27. One notices it in the spelling of English. (5)
28. You'll see a neat leg in it. (9)
29. Obviously the slogan of a going concern. (15)

DOWN

2. Help yourself too little. (9)
3. The fish for mine sweeping of course. (4)
4. The rise of the beastly savage. (6)
5. O'Mally, R.N., is regularly reformed. (8)
6. Condition of the iron as opposed to the wooden club. (10)
7. First star in the constellation. (5)
8. Longest word in the language no doubt, if you take the distance between its first and last letters. (6)
9. Insect for getting wedged in. (6)
14. Caused perhaps by a big blow on the head. (10)
17. Describes those who are not living up to their name. (9)
18. For a rite perhaps. (8)
19. Shells we take to heart. (7)
21. Part of the act is about a pound. (7)
22. Lined up the catch of course. (6)
24. The tune of "Doorn." (5)
26 (rev.). Useful for a tap room tea party. (4)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD



THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By CYNICUS

EXPLOITING THE WAR ON THE STOCK EXCHANGE—PROSPECT OF THE GILT-EDGED MARKET—AND OF TIN SHARES—B.S.A. AND E.P.T.

LET it be said at the outset of this page that if I am to take up this City pen seriously, I will only write, as Mr. Bernard Shaw did recently, as an uncensored capitalist. (In other words, I refuse to be a censored Socialist.) How long the capitalist system will last, and whether it will survive the war, are questions I cannot answer, but as long as it functions at all I feel entitled as a realistic investor to exploit it for all I am worth—which, I assure you, is much less than before the war. The Stock Exchange can after all be exploited in wartime, as long as it retains some freedom of action in the City and does not freeze itself solid in a film studio at Denham. Take, for example, the gilt-edged market. At the outbreak of war the Governor of the Bank pandered to the prevailing financial panic in the City by raising Bank rate from 2 per cent. to 4 per cent. There was no earthly need for taking this sadistically deflationary step, which did nothing to strengthen the position of sterling, but merely involved traders in extra bank charges and cost the Government an extra £200,000 a week on its tender issue of Treasury bills. And far from having any deterrent effect on the unsound use of money, it accentuated the flight from British Government stocks into cash and forced up the long-term rate of interest. Thus, British Government stocks became frozen at the minimum prices which the jobbers took it upon themselves to fix as a restriction upon business. Everyone wished to sell at these minimum prices; no one wished to buy. Here was the first opportunity presented to the investor of exploiting the war—or, I should say, of exploiting the folly of the Bank of England and the panic of the City. 2½ per cent. Consols had fallen from a pre-crisis price of 70½ to 62; the long-term rate of interest had risen from approximately 3½ per cent. to 4 per cent. Here was the opportunity to buy 2½ per cent. Consols. The price to-day is 66. It is not perhaps the stock I would now choose, but there are other stocks to buy in what is now a "bull" market.

* * *

Consider the various Treasury controls now being exercised in support of the gilt-edged market. First, the exchange control, although it is not as rigid as it might be, has virtually made it impossible for the investor to put funds outside this country. At the same time the new issue control is drastically restricting the issue of new capital, although there are still ways of evading its ban. This means that there is little or no outlet for money except the money market and British Government stocks. In the second place, the Governor of the Bank has been persuaded to acknowledge the error of his ways. Bank rate has been reduced to 3 per cent. and will have to be restored to 2 per cent. In other words, the short-term money rate will be brought down and money which found a temporary outlet in Treasury bills will be forced, in its normal pursuit of interest, back into the gilt-edged market. In the third place, the rate of accumulation of the money which is being forced into British Government stocks is being speeded by the excessive deflationism of the Government—by a budget which precipitated a slump in a number of trades which have not yet been directed to war purposes. So the position is reached where a temporarily increasing volume of idle funds is being increasingly restricted to one channel of investment—the gilt-edged market on the Stock Exchange. Here are the stocks which have still some way to go :—

	Interest Dates	Price in March	Present Price	% Flat	% Redemption*
Consols 4% 1957 or after ..	F. & A.	106	100½	£4 0 3	—
Locals 3% ..	J. A. J. O.	82⅜	77	£3 18 0	—
War 3½% 1952 or after ..	A. & O.	98½	89⅞	£3 18 0	—
Funding 2¾% 1952–57 ..	J. & D.	93½	89	£3 2 3	£4 0 9
Funding 2½% 1956–61 ..	A. & O.	86⅞	82⅜	£3 0 6	£4 4 0

* Gross equivalent of net redemption yield with tax at 7/6.

For private funds, where income is important, 4 per cent. Consols seems to be the right choice, and for sur-tax payers Funding 2½ per cent. in view of the eventual capital profit on redemption, which is free of tax. For the speculative-minded Local Loans and War Loan give the chance of an early capital profit—I would say 5 points, or even 10, if the war news is particularly good. But be careful to buy on a dull day.

* * *

Of course, the upward movement in the gilt-edged market cannot last indefinitely. If the war continues into a second year, if the heavy purchases of war material in America begin to weaken the dollar exchange, if a further fall in sterling, to, say, 3.50, begins to accelerate the rise in internal prices (in spite of the wartime control of the Ministry of Supply) then nothing can prevent a rise in interest rates. In other words, because it is really impossible to peg the dollar exchange during a long war, if we are forced to adhere to a "cash-and-carry" system, it is impossible to go on lowering the long-term rate of interest in the Keynesian manner. The gilt-edged market may improve in the next few months, pending the issue of the new War Loans, but there is a limit to the rise. And bad news from the war fronts may be the occasion of the halt.

* * *

It would be easier for the investor who prefers equity shares to Government stocks to exploit the economic policy of the Government in wartime if he knew what it was. But not even the Government could tell him. There is manifest a praiseworthy determination to prevent profiteering and check the rise in prices, but the Ministry of Supply will never be able to keep prices at levels which disregard the fall in sterling and the higher costs of freight and insurance. Take the case of tin. The Ministry of Supply on the outbreak of war fixed £230 per ton (the upper limit of the Buffer Pool's price range) as the maximum legal price at which tin could be sold, which means that allowing for exchange, freight and war-risk insurance they reduced the pre-war price by about 15 per cent. This was unduly generous to the American consumers, who rushed to buy in such panicky haste that they forced up the American price from 48.85 cents to over 70 cents per lb. The International Tin Committee promptly raised the export quotas of the restricting countries to 100 per cent., and later 120 per cent., for the third quarter and to 60 per cent., and later 70 per cent., for the fourth. Ample supplies of tin are being shipped to the United States, and the American price of Straits tin has now fallen to 55 cents per lb., the sterling equivalent of which is £305 per ton, which is still out of line with the London premium on Straits tin of £40 per ton. Tin-producing companies will, of course, profit from the war. The average quota of the restricting countries for the twelve months will amount to approximately 70 per cent., allowing for catching up of arrears. As Bolivia will not be able to produce her quota, and as exports from China are for the time suspended, demand will probably exceed supplies and the price of tin will have to be raised in spite of the ostriches in the Ministry of Supply. Therefore the investor should help himself to tin shares. This is my choice :

	1936/37 High	Present Price	Last Div. %	Gross Yield %
Holding Cos.—				
British Tin 10/– ..	24/6	13/3	7	£5 5 9
London Tin 4/– ..	*	3/6	4	£4 8 9
Producers—				
S'thn Kinta Cons. 5/– ..	25/7½	13/6	10	£3 14 0

* Before reconstruction.

The current dividend yields mean nothing, because they are based upon earnings from a very restricted quota. It is important, however, that these tin companies should fare comparatively well under the new E.P.T. Fortunately in the basic years 1936 and 1937 the average tin quotas were 92½ per cent. and 107½ per cent. respectively. I am not recommending these tin shares as war-time stocks. Nearly half the world consumption of tin is accounted for in the United States and American consumption is now quite rapidly increasing, thanks to the can manufacturers. When you buy tin shares you are investing primarily in the future of canned goods.

* * *

The terrible effect of the new Excess Profits Tax on the net distributable earnings of unluckily placed industrial companies was disclosed this week in the report of the Birmingham Small Arms Company. Gross earnings had risen by about 25 per cent., but the provision for tax was increased by 450 per cent. and the ordinary dividend was reduced from 10 per cent. to 6 per cent. The investment consequences of a budget aimed at cutting the profit out of private enterprise will be realistically examined in my article next week. The social consequences of the budget may be very pleasing but the investment consequencies are devastating.

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Rates and all information on page 594

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